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ALCOHOL, CULTURE,  
AND SOCIETY



# ALCOHOL, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY

by

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To  
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## EDITORIAL NOTE

IN THIS VOLUME many of the familiar facts regarding alcohol are studied in what will be to many readers an unfamiliar context. To the sociologist the discovery and invention of the processes of fermentation, brewing and distilling, and the use of the products so derived, are forms of cultural behavior and can be understood only by determining how they function as instruments in satisfying human needs within any society which may possess them. For the distinctive characteristic of man is that he does not satisfy his needs exclusively by the direct appropriation of the products of nature, as other animals do, but indirectly, by instrumentalities he has learned and invented, taught to his fellows, and accumulated across the centuries and millenniums of his history and prehistory. Without such instrumentalities, and dependent solely upon nature, the animal can attain only a precarious satisfaction of his basic biological needs for food, sex, and shelter. If man ever lived on such a plane, as Thomas Hobbes thought, his life could only have been as Hobbes described it, "poor, nasty, brutish and short."

But we know of no such men. Even the lowest on the scale of civilization possess vast stores of accumulated knowledge and skills; tools and material posses-

[ vii ]

sions; language and other means of communication; social organization and institutions; attitudes and values; art, morals, and religion; law, customs, and traditions; and other habits and abilities which, as members of a social group, they have inherited from their ancestors or learned for themselves. With the increase in such instrumentalities, man has not only been able to provide for his basic biological needs with a greater certainty, and with a greater quantity and a higher quality of goods, but to develop and satisfy new wants and desires. But it is always through the culture that the means of satisfaction are provided, and it is the attitudes and values of the culture, as embodied in its systems of morals, religion, law, and custom that determine what desires may be satisfied, by whom, on what conditions, in what circumstances, and to what extent.

As this book shows, alcohol is sociologically such an instrumentality for the satisfaction of need. It has existed in some form in almost every culture, but the needs it is designed to satisfy have been as varied as the cultures which have possessed it, as have also been the extent, conditions, and circumstances of satisfaction and the classes of persons to whom it is permitted or denied. In virtually every culture also its abuse has aroused the concern of the more discerning and led to various methods of control, but not until the development of effective methods of distillation, which made beverages of high alcoholic content readily accessible, did these abuses develop in their more aggravated forms, and not until the appearance of a highly complex technological culture did their control become a major problem of civilization.

The special significance of this book lies in its demonstration that the problem of alcohol must be studied in its cultural context if it is to be understood, and that any plan of control must be worked out in relation to that context if it is to be effective. It is to differences of culture that we must look for explanations of the differences in the extent and character of alcoholism in different societies, not to differences in their geographical environments or in the biological and psychological make-up of the persons who compose them. However important the latter types of difference may be in the explanation of individual cases of alcoholism, only cultural differences can explain the variations in the demographic characteristics of the inebriate population of different societies, or at different historical periods in the same society. What differences other than cultural, for example, can explain why the inebriacy ratios of the sexes vary so greatly among peoples descended from the same racial stock or belonging to different religious groups or occupying different positions in the class structure in the same geographical environment? Or why the ratios of class, sex, and other social or demographic groups vary from time to time within the same society? Similarly, why should plans of control, which have achieved some measure of success in one society, fail in another?

As Dr. Patrick here shows, we shall be able to develop a satisfactory plan of alcohol control in America only as we take into account the cultural factors of which our inebriacy rates are the inescapable resultant.

HOWARD E. JENSEN

Duke University  
November 25, 1951





## PREFACE

WHY SHOULD anyone feel disposed to write another book about alcoholic beverages? Many thousands of books and papers have already been written and many more are being written on the subject. Much of the literature has been injected with emotional, political, and other elements which have made the problem even more complicated than it inherently is. Some of the contemporary research (in the name of science) is being conducted by individuals and groups who are committed in advance to a particular point of view. On the other hand, a large number of excellent works have appeared on various phases of the subject. Not very much has been done from the sociological point of view. Herein lies the reason for this volume.

My idea is that an approach from the social and cultural point of view has much to offer toward a better understanding of the "alcohol problem." I have therefore attempted to look at some of the important findings on alcoholic beverages within that framework. The position which I seek to demonstrate is that the use of such beverages is largely a cultural phenomenon. I hope that many will find this book a useful guide in their thinking and that it may stimulate some toward further research in this direction.

It would be extremely naïve of an author to publish anything on this subject without being aware of the jeopardy in which he places himself. Since this is a question about which many people become extremely agitated when their cherished beliefs or positions are subjected to inquiry, an assault is not unexpected. Thus far I have found that there is one mitigating factor: the blows tend to balance each other by virtue of their opposite nature.

During the preparation of this volume I have become deeply indebted to many persons. My sincere appreciation goes to Olin T. Binkley, Haven Emerson, Hornell Hart, C. Aubrey Hearn, E. M. Jellinek, Howard E. Jensen, Howard W. Odum, H. Shelton Smith, and Edgar T. Thompson for reading the manuscript and offering their encouragement and helpful suggestions. For their invaluable help I am grateful to James B. Cook, Jr. and Elizabeth S. Drake for typing, and to Gerald G. Grubb for proofreading. Thanks must be expressed to authors and publishers for permitting me to quote from their works. Full acknowledgment is made to each in the text and bibliography.

I assume the responsibility for the conclusions and shortcomings found herein.

C. H. P.

Wake Forest, North Carolina  
December, 1951

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ALCOHOL, CULTURE,  
AND SOCIETY



## CHAPTER I

# A CULTURAL APPROACH

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES were among the earliest products which ancient man taught himself to manufacture. Their use dates from prehistoric times. Yet, strangely enough, the human race has never been able to reach a final decision about alcohol. Millions of people have enjoyed and defended it, and millions have loathed and condemned it, but few have understood its real nature.

The failure to understand alcohol is not due to lack of interest in the subject. It is unlikely that any field of inquiry has ever attracted a greater number of explorers than that of alcoholic beverages. It is an area which has been inviting to investors and enterprisers eager for financial gain, sensualists seeking an aid to pleasure, reformers attempting to remake society, statesmen endeavoring to establish law and order, many literati hoping to find something to stimulate and release their thoughts, and a few scientists searching for pure knowledge. An enormous body of literature has accumulated on the subject, numbering more than one hundred thousand books, papers, and pamphlets.<sup>1</sup> The great bulk of the literature is of a propagandistic nature and thus is strongly biased either in favor of or against the use of alcoholic drinks.

<sup>1</sup> E. M. Jellinek (ed.), *Alcohol Addiction and Chronic Alcoholism* (New Haven, 1942), p. xv.

The contentions range all the way from charges that alcohol has been the chief destroyer of civilizations to claims that it has played one of the principal roles in the development of civilizations. Assuredly there are few questions more heavily beclouded by doubt, uncertainty, and misinformation. It now appears, however, that such a state of confusion and ignorance may not continue for long in the modern world. The average citizen is asking certain serious questions about alcohol and its place in the life of man. He wants scientifically established facts upon which may be based intelligent personal and social behavior.

There is no escaping the fact that the use of alcoholic beverages constitutes one of the major problems in modern society, a problem which merits extensive investigation by present-day leaders and scientists who will approach it dispassionately and objectively. The greater proportion of the scientific research hitherto conducted on the subject has been concerned mainly with its physiological and psychological aspects. Most of the contemporary research seems also to center investigation on the "problem drinker" or the "abnormal drinker." It would simplify matters if the question could be limited in that manner; however, such an approach must be seriously questioned as not furnishing an adequate basis for understanding or dealing intelligently with the problem as a whole.

The author of this volume, as is the case with an increasing number of students of the alcohol problem, takes the view that culture is one of the most important factors, if not the principal one, involved in the use of alcoholic beverages, irrespective of the degree to which they may be used. The purpose of this investigation,



accordingly, is to seek a clearer understanding of the nature and extent to which the prevalence and forms of alcoholic indulgence in a given society are culturally influenced. Thus the hypothesis of this work may be stated as follows: the use of alcoholic beverages in a group or society is primarily a cultural phenomenon, and it is in the light of the culture of the group or society that the origin, development, forms, alterations, and control of the use of such beverages are to be understood.

At this point it might be well to set forth the conception of culture that will be employed as a theoretical basis of this analysis. The term "culture," as generally used in the social sciences, may be defined as the total system of invented or learned activities, attitudes, and materials which obtains in a society for the satisfaction of man's needs and desires. It is an instrumental order which has come into existence to satisfy the needs and desires of man through secondary methods rather than through a direct adaptation to his environment.<sup>2</sup> Culture is also a group phenomenon. It is socially acquired and socially transmitted by interaction between the members of a group.

Human society can be understood only by understanding culture. The distinguishing factor between the way human groups live and the way animal groups live is culture. Animals in order to live must adapt themselves to their surroundings. It is largely through biologically inherited action patterns and sense perception that they are able to make such an adaptation.

<sup>2</sup> Bronislaw Malinowski says: "Culture is essentially an instrumental apparatus by which man is put in a position the better to cope with the concrete specific problems that face him in his environment in the course of the satisfaction of his needs" (*A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays*, Chapel Hill, N. C., 1944, p. 150).

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Practically all their needs are supplied directly. But man in order to live continually modifies his environment. Malinowski rightly said: "The man of nature, the *Naturmensch*, does not exist."<sup>3</sup> Man creates an artificial, or secondary, environment, as he faces the problems of his world. He makes clothing, builds houses, prepares his food and drink, provides himself with means of transportation, and establishes religion and morals. In other words, man supplies practically all of his needs indirectly.

The distinguishing factor between the way any two human groups live is culture, irrespective of whether the one may live in New York, London, or Moscow, and the other in Polynesia, Africa, or the Arctic regions. What human beings learn and what they become, the thoughts they think, the activities in which they engage, and the life they follow largely depend upon the particular culture into which they are born and in which they live. Illustrating the influence of culture William F. Ogburn and Meyer F. Nimkoff write:

A novel example is furnished by Fung Kwok Keung, born Joseph Rinehart of American parents living in Long Island, New York. At the age of three, his parents deserted him, and he was adopted by Chinese, taken to China and reared there for nineteen years. Recently he returned to the United States. He is Chinese in manner, speech, habit, outlook—in all ways but appearance.<sup>4</sup>

Any element or trait in culture can be understood only in its cultural context. It must be seen as a functioning part of an organized whole. In modern society the electric motor must be seen in its relation-

<sup>3</sup> *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (1937), IV, 621.

<sup>4</sup> *Sociology* (New York, 1940), p. 8 n.

ship to transportation and manufacturing. The digging stick, in a preliterate society, must be seen in its relationship to the type of horticulture or agriculture of that society. The instrumental character of each cultural element or trait must be recognized. Each artifact must be defined by its use, by the ideas which are associated with it, and by the values which surround it.

All that has been said above applies equally to alcohol. To arrive at an intelligent understanding of the use of alcoholic beverages, it is necessary to examine them and their meaning in the light of the role which they play in various groups and societies. It is necessary to examine them just as freely and with as much objectivity as one might examine the place and function in a given society of the automobile, the cinema, breakfast cereals, or headache pills. It must be recognized that alcoholic beverages, like other things, have their place in a particular cultural system in order that they may perform a definite function. They are intended to satisfy certain needs or desires of man.

Upon investigation, however, it may be found that alcoholic beverages do not perform the function which they are supposed to perform. They may or may not be supplying the needs of man; they may be having harmful unintended consequences on both individual and group life; they may have outlived any usefulness which they originally possessed; or they may be in conflict with other elements or traits in a cultural system. In the following pages an attempt will be made to point out, in some respects, what the case actually is.

This analysis of the use of alcoholic beverages is from the cultural point of view, but certain other factors, such as physical, biological, and psychological

forces will also be considered. It should not be overlooked that each plays its respective part and that all function together in the total situation. To recognize the interrelationship of the various factors is of prime importance. However, though it is held that each factor has some bearing on the others, that view by no means implies that each is regarded as being of equal significance. Rather, the position taken in this work is that culture is the underlying factor involved in the use of alcoholic beverages.

#### DEFINITIONS

Many of the terms used in both lay and scientific literature on the alcohol problem are often loosely employed. They do not mean the same thing to all people. It seems well, therefore, to define certain terms that will be used in subsequent chapters. In making the following definitions it is not claimed that they are the only correct or permissible usages, but they conform to the widest scientific usage.

a) *Alcohol*, unless otherwise specified, will refer to ethyl alcohol. It will be used synonymously with the term "alcoholic beverage" without any reference to the actual amount of absolute alcohol contained in the various beverages.

b) *Drinker* or *user* refers to the person who consumes alcoholic beverages to any degree. These terms have no reference to regularity or quantity of alcoholic consumption.

c) *Occasional drinker* has reference to the person who drinks only rarely and then in very small amounts. Such an individual usually prefers not to drink but does so sometimes because of the situation in which he finds himself.



d) *Moderate drinker* is used to define the person who drinks small amounts of alcoholic beverages, occasionally or frequently, as a condiment or for their milder physiological and psychological effects.

e) *Immoderate drinker* refers to the person who drinks in such quantities as will enable him to realize the effect or "kick" which follows. He does not ordinarily drink to the point of drunkenness. Such a person usually drinks to celebrate, to work up enthusiasm for social participation, or to aid himself in keeping up with a "fast" group.

f) *Excessive drinker* indicates the person who frequently drinks to the point of intoxication. He may drink because of a spirit of recklessness, exuberance, or good fellowship, or because he cannot resist temptation.

g) *Alcohol addict* refers to the person who feels that he cannot live without alcohol. It indicates that such an individual has developed the habit of drinking and is unable, by himself alone, to break it.

h) *Chronic alcoholic* is used in connection with the individual who from prolonged and excessive use of alcoholic beverages—commonly over a period of many years—has developed definite psychological or physiological changes, usually resulting in a diseased condition.

i) *Inebriate* has reference to the person who is an habitual excessive drinker, irrespective of whether he is simply an excessive drinker, addict, or chronic alcoholic.

j) *Distilled spirits* refers to the liquors made by the process of fermentation with subsequent distillation. The most commonly used distilled liquors are whisky made from grains such as wheat, corn, or rye; gin made

from various grains and aromatic plant substances, almost always including juniper berries; rum, usually made from sugar cane; and brandy made from fruits such as grapes, apples, and peaches. The alcoholic content of these drinks is high, generally from 45 to 50 per cent. The amount of alcohol in each may be known from the "proof" which must appear on the label, the percentage being one-half of the designated proof; for example, 90 proof is 45 per cent and 100 proof is 50 per cent alcohol.

*k) Wine* has reference to alcoholic beverages made from fruit juices, plant sap, animal products, and other substances containing sugar, which are fermented directly. The process of fermentation gives an alcoholic content of not more than 16 per cent. The heavy or fortified wines have a higher alcoholic content because of the addition of distilled spirits.

*l) Beer* is used to indicate brewed beverages, such as ale, porter, and stout, which are ordinarily made from malt grain and hops. Beer is the most common of the American brewed beverages and contains a fairly low concentration of alcohol.

The percentage of alcohol in the various beverages is supplied in Table I.

TABLE I  
ALCOHOLIC CONTENT OF VARIOUS BEVERAGES\*

BEVERAGE	RANGE IN PER CENT OF ALCOHOL BY VOLUME
<b>Beers</b>	
White.....	1- 3
Lager.....	3- 5
Ales and Porters.....	4- 9
<b>Wines</b>	
German, Mosel and Rhine.....	7-14
French, white and red.....	6-10
Hungarian and Spanish (fortified).....	15-20
American clarets.....	10-17
Champagne.....	8-13
Sherry (fortified).....	18-23
Port (fortified).....	16-23
<b>Spirits</b>	
Whiskey.....	47-53
Brandy.....	48-54
Rum.....	50
Gin.....	50
<b>Liqueurs and Cordials</b>	
Chartreuse.....	32-50
Benedictine.....	38-60
Curaçao.....	42+
Absinthe.....	51-67

\* Source: George B. Wallace, "The Pharmacological Actions of Alcohol" in Haven Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man* (New York, 1932), p. 27.



## CHAPTER II

# SOME DRINKING CUSTOMS OF THE WORLD: PAST AND PRESENT\*

THE FOUNDATIONS of group behavior are to be found in custom and tradition, or social heredity; hence, the alcohol problem from the social point of view can be understood only if we bear in mind something of its historical background. The vast majority of the thoughts which the members of a group think and the tools and objects which they use have been handed down by earlier generations. It is through the medium of tradition that the historical continuity of the use of alcoholic beverages has been preserved and that many societies have become, in a cultural sense, the heirs of an alcoholic culture.

No record is to be found which tells the story of man's first use of alcoholic beverages. In all probability he began to use them in prehistoric times. Although alcohol per se was not known in antiquity, fermented and brewed beverages, wines and beers, in which it is the potent factor, have been known to practically all peoples from the dawn of history, and doubtless long before. The discovery of late Stone Age beer jugs has established the fact that some use of

\* This chapter does not purport to be a complete history of the use of alcoholic beverages. It is only an historical sketch designed to point out the role which culture, particularly custom and tradition, has played in the use of alcohol as a beverage.

fermented beverages existed in the Neolithic period.<sup>1</sup> The records of all ancient civilizations refer to the use of alcoholic beverages. The earliest of these accounts are found on Egyptian carvings, in the Hebrew script, and on Babylonian tablets. We shall now glance at some of these ancient references to the use of alcohol among a few of the oldest civilizations.

### ANCIENT EGYPT

A wealth of information on the use of wines and beers by the early Egyptians has been uncovered by archeologists. Numerous carvings have been discovered in the tombs of Beni-Hassen which illustrate the drinking customs of the Egyptian people who lived four thousand or more years ago. Pictures have been found showing methods of cultivating and gathering grapes, wine presses in operation, parties where intoxicated persons were attempting to stand on their heads, women suffering from overindulgence in wine, and men being carried home on the heads of their slaves after an evening of heavy drinking.<sup>2</sup> Another of the early references to drinking, an account of the return of one of the Pharaohs from a conquest, records the booty which the ruler brought back to his kingdom: "The taxes collected included 51 slaves, 470 jars of honey, 6228 jars of wine."<sup>3</sup> Lutz says the ancient Egyptians developed no general feeling against excessive drinking.<sup>4</sup>

McKinlay says:

<sup>1</sup> M. W. Stirling, "Primitive Man Took His Pink Elephants Seriously," *Science News Letter*, XXXIV (Oct. 29, 1938), 284.

<sup>2</sup> Adolph Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1894), pp. 197, 255.

<sup>3</sup> Robert S. Carroll, *What Price Alcohol?* (New York, 1941), p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cited by Arthur Patch McKinlay, "Ancient Experience with Intoxicating Drinks," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, IX (Dec., 1948), 393, from H. F. Lutz, *Viticulture and Brewing in the Ancient Orient* (New York, 1922), p. 97.

Credit must be given to Egyptian drinking for the oldest prose short story in Western literature, *The Master Thief*, forerunner of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* by many years. The king of Egypt commissioned his architect to build him a treasure house. In carrying out this commission the builder set one of the stones so that it could be removed at will. On his deathbed he told his two sons of the stone's secret, by which they could get access to the king's treasures. After the obsequies the young men proceeded to realize on their father's legacy and made a good haul the first night. The loss was soon noticed by the royal guards but seemed unaccountable. The next night more of the king's riches disappeared, and so on. The king then placed a huge trap among his treasures. The device worked and caught one of the despoilers on their next advent. The unlucky youth called to his brother, who was on watch, and bade him decapitate him and make off with the head lest their identity be revealed. The brother did as ordered. The next morning the headless body of the thief was found. The king, no wiser than before, had the corpse suspended on the wall and left the guards with orders to watch for any signs of mourning.

Meanwhile, the mother of the dead thief grieved so over her son's lack of burial that at last she threatened to reveal the whole affair to the king if her remaining son did not rescue his brother's body. The clever fellow hit on this scheme. He got several sacks of wine, hung them over some asses, and went by the place where the guards were watching. At the right moment he loosened some of the fastenings of the bags. The wine began to leak out. He tore his hair with vexation. The watchers rushed to the rescue of the wine. The upshot of the affair was that the guards were soon buried in wine and slumber, and the body was safe in the arms of the sorrowing mother.<sup>5</sup>

#### CHINA

The records of ancient China give evidence of the use of wine and other liquors. Generally speaking, the Chinese have followed a doctrine of moderation and temperance in the use of alcoholic beverages. It

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 397.

may be that opium and other drugs have played a more dominant role. ] However, many Chinese have drunk heavily and habitually, others have drunk moderately each day, and many others have been total abstainers. Wine has been the theme of many Chinese poems and proverbs. Two of the ancient proverbs run: "Three cups of wine still everything and a drinking bout will dissipate a thousand cares." "A dry Chinese is as dry as a rock and a wet one can drink more than any other people on the globe."<sup>6</sup>

From the earliest times some of the emperors and other leaders of the Chinese people took a strong position against the use of intoxicating beverages. An emperor during the Hsia dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.) is said to have banished a man because he had discovered a method of making wine.<sup>7</sup> The death penalty which is reported to have been meted out to a pair of royal astronomers during the reign of Chung-K'ang well illustrates the ancient Chinese view on drunkenness. The story of this case is given in *Shoo-King* (a work reportedly begun by Confucius and perfected by Mencius), Book IV, chapter 2:

He and Ho had neglected the duties of their office, and were sunk in wine in their *private* cities, and the Prince of Yin received the imperial charge to go and punish them. . . . Now here are He and Ho. They have entirely subverted their virtue, and are sunk and lost in wine. They have violated the duties of their office, and left their posts . . . —so stupidly went they astray *from their duty* in the matter of heavenly appearances, and rendering themselves liable to the death appointed by the former kings.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Merrill Moore, "Chinese Wine," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, IX (Sept., 1948), 271, 273.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert H. Gowen and Josef W. Hall, *An Outline History of China* (New York, 1927), p. 39.

<sup>8</sup> James Legge, *The Chinese Classics* (London, 1865), III, Part II, 162-166.



Another of the early Chinese references to the use of alcoholic beverages is a document entitled "The Announcement about Drunkenness," an imperial edict supposed to have been promulgated about 1120 B.C. It says: "Our people have been greatly disorganized, and lost their virtue, which can be traced to their indulgence in spirits."<sup>9</sup> A system was adopted in 98 B.C. under which intoxicating liquors were made and sold only by the government under strict regulations.<sup>10</sup> In the year 459 the Emperor Liu Pe'i of the Northern Wei dynasty issued an edict declaring that all liquor makers, liquor sellers, and liquor drinkers should be beheaded.<sup>11</sup> The Mongol Emperor Kublai Khan issued an edict in the year 1279 condemning all dealers in alcoholic beverages to banishment and slavery.<sup>12</sup>

#### INDIA

The ancient Indo-Aryan tribes of India had an intoxicating drink called *soma*, which they offered as a libation to their deities. Our main source of information about this drink and the customs involved in its use is the *Rig-Veda* (1000 B.C.), the sacred books, largely made up of hymns used by the priests in their ceremonies. The Soma sacrifice formed the center of the ritual of the *Rig-Veda*, and the god Soma was one of the most popular deities, more than one hundred and twenty of the hymns being addressed to him.<sup>13</sup> The gods, particularly Indra, were looked upon as being extravagantly fond of *soma rasa*, frequently termed

<sup>9</sup> S. Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom* (New York, 1913), I, 808 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem* (1925), II, 586.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 587.

<sup>13</sup> Arthur MacDonell, *A Vedic Reader for Students* (Oxford, [1928]), pp. 152-153.

*madhu*, a wine made from the soma plant. The liquor was thought to be consumed by the gods as it was poured upon the altar fires. Indra was regarded as being incapable of any great or heroic act unless intoxicated. Two of the Vedic hymns read:

Even Heaven and Earth bow down before him; before his vehemence even the mountains are afraid. Who is known as the Soma-drinker, holding the bolt in his arm, who holds the bolt in his hand: he, O men, is Indra.<sup>14</sup>

Come hither, O Indra, to our sacrifice. Drink of the soma, O soma drinker; thine intoxication is that which gives us abundance of cows. Come hither, O Indra, and intoxicate thyself.<sup>15</sup>

It seems that in their offerings of soma, the people and the priests consumed an increasing proportion of the offering themselves, many of them becoming inordinate drunkards.

The laws of Manu (200 B.C.—A.D. 200) contain many prohibitions of drunkenness and also impose heavy penalties for violations of those laws. One of those edicts reads as follows:

for drinking (the spirituous liquor called) Sura . . . Excluded from all fellowship at meals, excluded from all sacrifices, excluded from instruction and from matrimonial alliances, abject and excluded from all religious duties, let them wander over (this) earth.

Such (persons) who have been branded with (indelible) marks must be cast off by their paternal and maternal relations, and receive neither compassion nor a salutation; this is the teaching of Manu. (IX, 237-239.)<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Dorchester, *The Liquor Problem in All Ages* (New York, 1884), p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> G. Buhler (trans.), *The Laws of Manu* (Oxford, 1886), pp. 383-384.

## GREECE

Many of the Greek writers—Homer, Plato, Athenaeus, Plutarch, and others—frequently referred to the drinking customs of ancient Greece. Dionysus, or Bacchus, was the god of wine. It was thought that through the use of wine he was able to set the soul free from all the impediments of the flesh. Libations were offered to the gods at mealtime and during sacrifices on the altars. However, moderation was the accepted standard in drinking among the ancient Greeks, and the mixing of water and wine was practiced in order to produce temperance. In fact, there is no reference in ancient Greek literature to mass drunkenness, but there are references to individual drunkenness and to mass drunkenness among foreign peoples.

Homer puts strong temperance sentiments on the lips of some of his heroes. An example is Hector's reply to his mother, who had urged him to refresh himself with wine:

The great Hector of the glancing helm answered her: "Bring me no honey-hearted wine, my lady mother, lest thou cripple me of my courage and I be forgetful of my might."<sup>17</sup>

References to immoderate drinking among the ancient Greeks are rare; but there are a few notable exceptions, e.g., Homer's account of the tragic end of Elpenor after a drunken debauch:

A vulgar soul  
Born but to banquet and to drain the bowl,  
He, hot and careless, on a turret's height,  
With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night;  
The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay,  
And down he hasten'd, but forgot his way;  
Full headlong from the roof the sleeper fell,  
And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in Hell.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Iliad* vi (Lang, Leaf, and Myers' translation).

<sup>18</sup> *Odyssey* x, ll. 661 ff. (Pope's translation).



Under the stern laws attributed to Lycurgus, habitual and excessive drinking was said to have been punished with great severity.<sup>19</sup>

The following lines of Theognis express the ambivalence of attitude toward the use of alcoholic beverages among the Greeks:

O wine, in some things I praise thee; in others I blame thee; nor can I altogether love thee or hate thee. A good thou art and an evil; what wise man could praise thee or blame thee?<sup>20</sup>

According to Plato, to drink undiluted wine was considered barbaric. Although wine shops were established in most of the cities, the masses generally adhered to the custom of strict moderation. The members of the celebrated council of the Areopagus were obligated to abstain from using alcoholic beverages, and if one of them was found in a state of drunkenness, he was punished by death.<sup>21</sup> Among the Spartans drunkenness was considered very disgraceful. Plato wrote that intemperance was entirely rooted out of ancient Sparta, there being no drinking house or association in any town or village.<sup>22</sup> Regarding the use of wine, Plato presented his personal position strongly. In the *Republic* he excluded wine for all people under thirty years of age, and he advocated that it be used only moderately after that age to relieve the infirmities of the flesh.

The case of Alexander the Great presents another of the few known examples of immoderate drinking among the ancient Greeks. Of his death Seneca wrote the following:

<sup>19</sup> Dorchester, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, III, 1142.

<sup>21</sup> Dorchester, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Here is this hero, invincible by the toils of prodigious marches, by all the dangers of sieges and combats, by the most violent extremes of heat and cold, here he lies, conquered by his intemperance, and struck to earth by the fatal cup of Hercules.<sup>23</sup>

## ROME

In the early days of Rome wine was scarce and was used mainly to take the place of milk in libations to the gods. Men under the age of thirty and women of any age were forbidden to drink wine except at sacrifices. The law against the drinking of wine by women became incorporated in the moral feelings of the people, so that its violation was regarded as a serious crime. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Romulus was the author of a law which permitted a husband to kill his wife for drinking wine or committing adultery.<sup>24</sup> Pliny cites the story of a man by the name of Mecenius who murdered his wife for taking a drink of wine and was acquitted of the crime by Romulus.<sup>25</sup> Cato is represented as saying: "The husband has absolute authority over the wife; it is for him to condemn and punish her if she has been guilty of any shameful act, such as drinking wine."<sup>26</sup> Cato further says that it was the custom for the male relatives to give the female a kiss in order to discover whether or not she had been drinking wine.<sup>27</sup>

During the course of the Roman Empire the attitude toward drinking changed. Wine became more

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Axel Gustafson, *The Foundation of Death* (Boston, 1884), pp. 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> *Roman Antiquities*, trans. by Earnest Cary, Version of Edward Spelman (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), I, 385.

<sup>25</sup> *Natural History* xiv, chap. xiv (trans. John Bostock and H. T. Riley).

<sup>26</sup> *Dorchester, op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>27</sup> *Pliny, loc. cit.*

plentiful, and excessive drinking became more prevalent among all classes of people, including both men and women. In the words of Heitland, "It is said that gluttony grew fast, with disastrous effect on the morals of young men, and that the example of their betters led to an epidemic of drunkenness among the common people."<sup>28</sup> The Roman drinking bout came to be a common affair. Both men and women took great pleasure in seeing which could outdrink the other. Shakespeare portrayed the situation when he had Cleopatra say of her drinking bout with Antony:

O times!—

I laugh'd him out of patience; and that night  
I laugh'd him into patience; and next morn  
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed.<sup>29</sup>

*Seneca* (d. A.D. 65) pictured women as passing whole nights at the banquet table, boasting of their ability to drink excessive amounts of wine.<sup>30</sup> In an effort to check widespread intemperance, the Roman Emperor Domitian in the year A.D. 81 ordered that half the vineyards be destroyed, and prohibited the planting of more without his imperial license.<sup>31</sup>

### THE MOSLEM WORLD

The Moslems furnish one of the best examples of a people who give no place in their culture to the use of alcoholic beverages. It appears that they are justly regarded as being among the most abstemious peoples of the world. The 230,000,000 adherents of Islam

<sup>28</sup> W. E. Heitland, *The Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 1909), II, 222.

<sup>29</sup> *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, scene v.

<sup>30</sup> *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, V, 2300.

<sup>31</sup> Cited by E. G. Baird, "The Alcohol Problem and the Law," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, IV (March, 1944), 543, from French, *Nineteen Centuries of Drink in England* (1884), p. 6.

inhabit many parts of the earth, but everywhere they interpret their religion as absolutely prohibiting the use of alcoholic beverages. The literature on the subject, fragmentary in nature though it is, indicates that the vast majority of Moslems abide by the prohibition. The few Moslems who use intoxicants apparently live in seaport towns or in cities with strong Western influences.

The Moslem injunction against the use of alcoholic beverages goes back to Mohammed himself. Several legends have been handed down regarding the occasion of the Prophet's prohibiting the use of intoxicants. One of the stories is that the Prophet made a night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, accompanied by the Angel Gabriel, and while in Jerusalem, was told by the angel that the use of wine was henceforth forbidden him.<sup>32</sup> Another of the legends recounts that some of the men in Mohammed's army overindulged in wine one night, and, quarreling among themselves, almost caused the overthrow of all the Prophet's plans. To prevent such situations in the future Mohammed announced his prohibition of the use of intoxicants.<sup>33</sup>

The reasons for the prohibition of wine (generally interpreted by Moslems as meaning all intoxicating beverages) according to the Koran are simply that the harmful qualities of intoxicants surpass the beneficial qualities. The Koran reads as follows on the subject:

They will ask thee concerning wine and lots: Answer, In both there is great sin, and *also some* things of use unto men; but their sinfulness is greater than their use.

O true believers, surely wine, and lots, and images, and di-

<sup>32</sup> St. Clair Tisdall, *The Original Sources of the Qur'an* (London, 1905), p. 222.

<sup>33</sup> *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, IV, 1803.

vining arrows, *are* an abomination of the work of Satan; therefore avoid them that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you, by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God, and from prayer: will ye not therefore abstain *from them*? Obey God and obey the apostle, and take heed to *yourselves*: but if ye turn back, know that the duty of the apostle is only to preach publicly.<sup>34</sup>

The forces of the Moslem world operating to keep its people from using alcoholic beverages are difficult to ascertain. For one thing, it seems that the Moslems have always regarded alcohol as a foreign and costly luxury. Also, they are a people who permit only a minimum of contact with other cultures. They are unwilling to make concessions to any other culture which would be likely to affect their religious principles. It is regard for these principles that may constitute the basic reason for Moslem abstinence from alcohol. At the center of Islam's cultural system are strong religious beliefs and rules that dominate and control every act of a Moslem's daily life. As André Servier says, "The Musulman community is theocratic; everything in it is regulated by religious law, the most trivial actions of the individual as well as its institutions. God is the supreme master."<sup>35</sup> Frederick Jones Bliss says, "Total abstinence is the glory of Moham-medanism. It is as much a part of religion as prayer and fasting."<sup>36</sup>

It might be pointed out that the Moslem's abstinence from alcoholic beverages is no indication that he does not long for them, or that he is temperate at

<sup>34</sup> The Koran (Philadelphia, 1923), chap. ii, p. 25, and chap. v, pp. 92, 93.

<sup>35</sup> *Islam and the Psychology of the Musulman* (New York, 1924), p. 196.

<sup>36</sup> *The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine* (New York, 1912), p. 276.



heart. There are some hints which signify the contrary. The Koran perhaps helps to pacify the faithful Moslem by promising him wine and other indulgences in the world to come.

Those who are ever constant at their prayers, and who own the judgment day a truth, and who control their desires, and who are true to their trusts, these shall dwell amid gardens (70 22-35). There virgin brides await them who never age, fruits, flesh and wine at their desire, and the salutation, Peace, Peace! (56 11-36)<sup>37</sup>

#### ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AMONG PRELITERATE PEOPLES

Alcoholic beverages are widespread although not universal in their distribution among preliterate societies. However, in contrast to the very few and not always clear cases of the absence of such drinks, the instances where the natives make and use them are manifold. Largely because of their lack of knowledge of the process of distillation, the majority of primitive peoples use only wine and beer. The beverages are often associated with spiritual attributes, and sometimes the drinking of them is considered a necessary preliminary to the acquisition of divine inspiration. The occasion for drinking, however, is usually at ceremonial or social gatherings. With reference to the use of alcoholic beverages at social functions, Horton says: "In Africa the occasion is the 'beer dance'; in South America, the 'spree'; among the Ifugao, the 'drinkfest,' and so forth."<sup>38</sup>

The ingenuities in which many societies have had to engage in order to obtain alcohol is sometimes amazing. From the standpoint of cultural develop-

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in H. U. Weitbrecht Staunton, *The Teaching of the Qur'an* (New York, 1919), p. 21.

<sup>38</sup> "The Function of Alcohol in Primitive Societies," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, IV (Sept., 1943), 247.

ment the Tasmanian aborigines were about as low as any people of whom we have record; yet they devised a method of making a fermented liquor. They tapped a species of gum tree and let the sap accumulate in a hole, dug out with stones, at the base, where it remained for some time to undergo a natural fermentation. Although crude, the result was evidently a potable wine.<sup>39</sup>

Fermented beverages were made by the American Indians long before the coming of the Europeans to this country. Drinking played an important role in their religious ceremonies. The Indians looked upon the experience of intoxication as a state of inspiration and ecstasy imparted by the divine spirit.<sup>40</sup> In Africa among the Bantu a variety of intoxicating drinks are prepared from maize, millet, and sorghum. The desire for these drinks is so great with the Bantu people that they will go hungry in order to turn their staple food into beverages. Their drinking is either a "favourite pastime"—to quote Junod—or a necessary accompaniment to religious rites such as marriage or burial.<sup>41</sup> The people of the Elgeyo Tribe of Kenya make a beer from grain or honey which they use on all ceremonial occasions and at almost any celebration. J. A. Massam says:

The old men have few concerns beyond beer drinking. They may occasionally get drunk, but there is no disgrace, provided they do not become quarrelsome. Even a habitual drunkard—a rarity in Elgeyo—is tolerated, so long as he is good tempered and quiet.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> George P. Murdock, *Our Primitive Contemporaries* (New York, 1926), pp. 14-15.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Viljoen, *The Economics of Primitive Peoples* (London, 1936), p. 105.

<sup>41</sup> Audrey Richards, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe* (London, 1932), p. 99.

<sup>42</sup> *The Cliff Dwellers of Kenya* (London, 1927), p. 105.



In the Nicobar Islands the old men and women are more or less constant users of fermented drinks, derived by placing pots to catch the liquid which seeps out when the protuberances of the cocopalms are cut off. The drink makes them happy and talkative.<sup>43</sup>

To indicate further the variety and widespread use of alcoholic beverages among preliterate peoples the following quotation is given from a work by Sumner and Keller:

*Yangona* is prepared with much formality by the Fijians, and *kava* and palm-wine are widely in use in Melanesia and the Pacific Islands. . . . The Soyats of the Yenesei make kumyss from mare's milk, less often from that of the reindeer. . . .

The Tibetans drink barley-wine or *chang*, and various forms of beer are common in India. *Saki*, *arrack*, and other names of liquors distilled from rice, date-juice, and other grains and fruits are more or less familiar. Even the Ainos have their fermented drink from rice and millet. Palm-wine is common in the Malay Archipelago, and also a combination of arrack and honey which is very intoxicating.<sup>44</sup>

#### THE USE OF FERMENTED DRINKS IN THE WESTERN WORLD FROM THE FIRST CENTURY TO THE DISCOVERY OF DISTILLATION

According to Berthold Laufer, the grapevine (*vitis vinifera*) is one of the ancient cultivated plants of western Asia and Egypt, although not one of the oldest, for cereals and many types of plants appeared far earlier; but the grapevine is "old enough to have its beginnings lost in the dawn of history."<sup>45</sup> However, it is interesting to note that the spread of viticulture

<sup>43</sup> George Whitehead, *In the Nicobar Islands* (London, 1924), pp. 67-68.

<sup>44</sup> *The Science of Society* (New Haven, 1929), III, 2087-88.

<sup>45</sup> *Sino-Iranica* (Chicago, Field Museum of Natural History, Publication 201, Anthropological series, Vol. XV, No. 3, 1919), p. 220.

and of Christianity in Western Europe were concomitant. Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire about the first decade of the fourth century. It was at that time that the culture of the grape began to spread throughout Gaul, and St. Martin of Tours was found preaching the Gospel and planting vineyards at the same time.<sup>46</sup> In fact, it seems that most of the monasteries diligently applied themselves to the cultivation of the vine; hence the origin of many of the famous vineyards and wines of Western Europe. The monks through their architecture expressed their appreciation of the vine by introducing sculptured vine leaves and clusters of grapes into the decorations of the churches which they built. An example of such decorations is found in the moldings of the principal doorway of the Church of St. Remi. Likewise, Reims Cathedral offers several examples of a similar character. The monks in their chronicles ascribed to St. Remi many miracles, one of which is commemorated by a bas-relief on the north doorway of Reims Cathedral, presenting him in the house of one of his relatives, Celia, making the sign of the cross over an empty barrel, which reportedly became filled with wine.<sup>47</sup> St. Remi, one of the famous monks of the sixth century, is chiefly remembered as a converter of kings and a cultivator of vineyards. As Henry Vizetelly says, "It should be remembered that for a lengthy period—not only in France, but in other countries—the choicest wines were those produced in the vineyards belonging to the Church, and that *vinum theologium* was justly held superior to all others."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Henry Vizetelly, *A History of Champagne* (London, 1882), p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

The early Britons seem to have been a temperate people. But the drinking customs of the Saxon invaders became widely diffused among the inhabitants of Britain, and the use of alcoholic beverages increased to such an extent that excessive drinking grew widespread among all classes of people.<sup>49</sup> Conditions became such that Anglo-Saxon notions of hospitality were hostile to sobriety. The host was expected to offer liquor to every guest and, if possible, persuade him to drink to intoxication. But efforts were made to check such extensive use of alcoholic drinks because the habits of the masses had become sadly intemperate, with the clergy setting the pace in excessive drinking.<sup>50</sup> In fact, nothing better shows the prevalence of intemperance in Britain during those early years than the habits of the clergy. We find Boniface, the Venerable Bede, and the Council of Clovershoe complaining bitterly of the habitual drunkenness of the clergy.<sup>51</sup> In 569, at the Synod of St. David, four canons were adopted which required that priests guilty of drunkenness through ignorance, negligence, or design should do various penances, the most severe being for the priest who had led others to drunkenness: he was required to do "penance as a murderer of souls."<sup>52</sup> In spite of the efforts of a few leaders, England from the reign of Henry VIII became even more thoroughly given to the use of alcoholic beverages. Lords, clergymen, and women of noble families took the lead in the national custom of heavy drinking. In the sixteenth century the *Northumberland Household Book* set the daily consumption at a quart of beer and a quart of

<sup>49</sup> Dorchester, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 545.

wine each for the lord and lady of the manor; the allowance for the ten-year-old heir was set at two quarts of beer, and that for the household staff at a gallon.<sup>53</sup>

### THE DISCOVERY OF DISTILLATION

In the preceding pages it has been observed that wines and beers, both beverages of low alcoholic content, have been used by a large part of the people of the world since before the beginning of recorded history. Distilled spirits, however, are a relatively recent development, going back, at least in Europe, only to the eleventh or twelfth century. The process of distillation, which gives us alcohol per se, is said to have been discovered about a thousand years ago by the famous Arabian physician Rhazes (852?-932?), who isolated alcohol from wine.<sup>54</sup> Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) was the first to describe intelligently the process of distillation and thus to make possible the large-scale manufacture of modern distilled liquors such as whisky, brandy, and others.<sup>55</sup> The discovery of distillation was therefore a highly significant event in that it made possible the production of beverages containing several times the alcoholic content of the strongest wines. Thus, as Haggard and Jellinek say, "Inebriety existed long before brandy was invented, but distillation gave to wide circles a convenient and concentrated source of inebriety."<sup>56</sup>

It should be noted, however, that the first distilled liquors were not used as beverages but as medicines.

<sup>53</sup> Cited by Howard W. Haggard and E. M. Jellinek, *Alcohol Explored* (New York, 1942), p. 58.

<sup>54</sup> J. A. Waddell and H. B. Haag, *Alcohol in Moderation and Excess* (Richmond, 1940), p. 24.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>56</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 38.



They were looked upon as possessing extraordinary healing powers. The European alchemists believed that in distilled liquors they had discovered the long-sought antidote to senility, and consequently named it *aqua vitae*, "water of life." These liquors came to be regarded as cures for almost all ailments of the human body. The wildest of claims were made for their medicinal powers. A Florentine document of the fourteenth century, in stating the powers of brandy when used both externally and internally, said that it was a remedy against graying hair and lice, and that it cured body aches, sterility, gout, and deafness.<sup>57</sup>

As distilled liquors became more plentiful and the price lower, they increased in popularity and began to be used widely as beverages, while still retaining their medicinal uses. In the seventeenth century the situation was such in England that, according to Lecky: "Retailers of gin were accustomed to hang out painted boards announcing that their customers could be made drunk for a penny, and dead drunk for two pence, and should have straw for nothing; and cellars strewn with straw were accordingly provided, into which those who had become insensible were dragged, and where they remained until sufficiently recovered to renew their orgies."<sup>58</sup>

The above indication of widespread drinking does not seem to be overdrawn when it is realized that the production of ale and beer, the common drinks of the poorer classes, was estimated to have been not less than 12,400,000 barrels in England in the single year 1688.<sup>59</sup> That means, since the population of England and

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>58</sup> William E. H. Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1888). I. 519.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 518.

Wales was a little over 5,000,000, there were nearly two and a half barrels each for every man, woman, and child.

About 1724 the custom of gin-drinking became diffused among the masses of the population of England, and it is said to have spread as though it were an epidemic. The situation with respect to intemperance became so grave that a petition was presented to Parliament (February 20, 1736) from the magistrates of Middlesex. The petitioners asserted:

That the drinking of distilled liquors had for some years past greatly increased.

That the constant and excessive use thereof had destroyed thousands of His Majesty's subjects.

That great numbers of others were by its use rendered unfit for useful labour, debauched in morals and drawn into all kinds of wickedness.

That these pernicious liquors were not only sold by distillers and general shopkeepers, but by many persons in inferior trades, by which means journeymen, apprentices, and servants, were drawn in to taste, and by degrees to like, approve, and immoderately drink thereof.

That the practice was dangerous to the health, strength, peace and morals, and tended greatly to diminish the labour and industry of His Majesty's subjects.<sup>60</sup>

Stirred to action, Parliament passed a bill intended to destroy the greater part of the traffic in spirits. This was the famous Gin Act of 1736, which was presented by Sir Joseph Jeckyll. Some of the stipulations of the act were as follows:

Be it enacted that from September 29th no person shall presume, by themselves or any others employed by them, to

<sup>60</sup> *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, III, 926, cited from Crosfill, *Historical Survey of the Temperance Question*, pp. 30-31.

sell or retail any brandy, rum, arrack, usquebaugh, geneva, aqua vitae, or any other distilled spirituous liquors, mixed or unmixed, in any less quantity than two gallons, without first taking out a license for that purpose within ten days at least before they sell or retail the same; for which they shall pay down £50, to be renewed ten days before the year expires, paying the like sum . . . .<sup>61</sup>

Such drastic legislation—almost prohibitive at the time—aroused the greatest excitement and incurred the strongest opposition. It failed, apparently because public opinion and social custom were opposed to it. The act was attacked and evaded, and finally popular indignation against the government became so great that riots and rebellions broke out. In 1743 the measure was repealed and replaced by a more moderate law, known as the “Tippling Act.”<sup>62</sup>

#### ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND THE AMERICAN SCENE

The drinking customs of Europe were introduced to this continent by the first explorers. In 1535, at one of the earliest meetings between the French and the Indians, on the Island of Orleans in the St. Lawrence River, Jacques Cartier is reported to have celebrated the occasion with a feast of bread and wine in honor of the chief, Donnaconna, and his warriors.<sup>63</sup> And, according to tradition, when Henry Hudson, the British navigator, sailed into New York Bay and found some Delaware Indians on a certain island, he made friends with them by giving them their first taste of intoxicating liquor. It is further reported that the Indians thereafter referred to that island as “Manahachto-nienk” (corrupted by the white man into “Manhattan”), which in the language of the Delawares

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> H. P. Biggar, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (Ottawa, 1924), p. 122.

means "the island where we all became intoxicated."<sup>64</sup>

Thus we see that the use of alcoholic beverages in this country is at least as old as the white man's knowledge of the continent. In fact, they were used to some extent even before the discovery of America, for the traditions of many American Indian tribes include references to ancient rites that involved indulgence in native intoxicants.

When the early English colonists came to America, they brought with them the drinking habits and customs of their mother country. In the small cargo which the *Mayflower* carried was a supply of liquor for our Pilgrim Fathers.<sup>65</sup> According to the records, the ship *Arabella*, which brought Governor Winthrop to Massachusetts Bay, had among its supplies the following: "42 tuns of beer, 14 tuns of water, 1 hogshead of vinegar, 2 hogsheads of cider and 4 pumps for water and beer."<sup>66</sup> Soon after their arrival the colonists provided for the manufacture, sale, and distribution of alcoholic beverages.

Various alcoholic drinks were universally regarded as wholesome by the early settlers. According to John Allen Krout, "Puritan clergymen, Dutch merchants and Virginia planters agreed that the use of alcoholic beverages was not only beneficial, but also necessary. They were quick, however, to rebuke individual excesses; for all such indiscretions signified an abuse of nature's wholesome gifts, and were, therefore, violations of the Divine will in regard to man's use of nat-

<sup>64</sup> John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations* (Philadelphia, 1881), pp. 71-74, 262.

<sup>65</sup> Roland G. Usher, *The Pilgrims and Their History* (New York, 1918), p. 70.

<sup>66</sup> E. H. Cherrington, *The Evolution of Prohibition in the United States of America* (Westerville, Ohio, 1920), p. 10.



ural blessings."<sup>67</sup> Thus there was no attitude of hostility to the use of intoxicants even on the part of the moral and religious forces. The church of the colonial days did not recognize any evil of great importance in the use of alcohol. On the other hand, the use of liquors, sometimes to an immoderate degree, was common at church functions and especially at weddings, church councils, and funerals. The only phase of the question which seemed to arouse any opposition was that which showed itself in the form of drunkenness. A clearer insight is gained into the attitude which characterized the Colonial period when we examine some of the early records, such as the following:

1631. The Virginia Colonial Assembly enacts a law stating that "mynisters shall not give themselves to excesse in drinkinge, or riott, spendinge theire tyme idellye by day or night, playing at dice, cards, or any other unlawful game. . . ."<sup>68</sup>

1633. Robert Cole of Massachusetts Colony having been frequently punished for drunkenness is ordered to wear a red "D" about his neck for a year.<sup>69</sup>

1678. The funeral charges of Mrs. Mary Norton, widow of Reverend George Norton, include an expenditure of £10 13/100 for 51½ gallons of best malaga wine.<sup>70</sup>

1685. At the funeral of Reverend Thomas Cobbs, minister of Ipswich, there are provided a barrel of wine and two barrels of cider.<sup>71</sup>

1729. The town of Salem, Massachusetts, provides six gallons of wine for the funeral of a pauper.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>67</sup> *The Origins of Prohibition* (New York, 1925), p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large . . . Virginia* (Richmond, 1809), I, 158.

<sup>69</sup> Cherrington, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>70</sup> Albert Bushnell Hart (ed.), *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts* (New York, 1927), I, 275.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Cherrington, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

1644 [1744?]. The court of Pennsylvania issues the following order: "The court apprehending that it is not fit to deprive the Indians of any lawful comforts which God alloweth to all men by use of wine orders that it shall be lawful for all men who are licensed to retail wines, to sell also to Indians.<sup>73</sup>

Early in the eighteenth century a change took place in the Colonial drinking customs. When the early settlers came to the New World they were accustomed to using wines and malt liquors as their principal alcoholic beverages, and sought by domestic production to supply themselves with their favorite drinks. Since grapes and high quality malt, as well as skilled brewers and malters, were scarce, substitutes such as apple cider, wine made from wild grapes, and peach brandy were used with some success. Yet even with all the imported alcoholic beverages, the domestic production of wines and beers, and the various substitutes, the demand for alcoholic drinks was not being adequately met. The colonists, therefore, turned to distilled liquors. Rum in large quantities was imported from the West Indies. Molasses, brought by traders from England's island possessions, made possible a large-scale home production of rum. It was this change to spirituous liquors which brought about a great transformation in the Colonial drinking customs.

The use of distilled spirits became embedded in the social life of the American people at an early date. As John Allen Krout says:

Rum seemed to be ubiquitous. It was found in the finest tavern and the vilest road-house. The traveler seldom journeyed far enough to escape it, even in the mountains of the frontier. People of fortune kept a stock of good quality in their homes, while the servant and common laborer regarded it as indispensable. Parents gave it to children for many of

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

the minor ills of childhood, and its wholesomeness for those in health, it appeared, was only surpassed by its healing properties in case of disease. No other elements seemed capable of satisfying so many human needs. It contributed to the success of any festive occasion and inspirited those in sorrow and distress. It gave courage to the soldier, endurance to the traveler, foresight to the statesman, and inspiration to the preacher. It sustained the sailor and the plowman, the trader and the trapper. By it were lighted the fires of revelry and of devotion. Few doubted that it was a great boon to mankind.<sup>74</sup>

The latter half of the eighteenth century found distilled spirits popular with all classes of people. The popularity and low price of whisky, brandy, and rum caused widespread intemperance. Almost every town of any size had its stillhouse. According to the records, there were 2,579 distilleries in the United States in 1792; and the consumption of liquor in that year equaled two and one-half gallons for each man, woman, and child.<sup>75</sup> This rate, with minor fluctuations, appears to have held until about 1860. Then from 1860 to 1875 there was a reduction of about one gallon in the per capita consumption of hard liquors;<sup>76</sup> such a decline may have been due to the critical social and economic conditions of that period.

The most reliable information on the production and consumption of alcoholic beverages indicates that there was no appreciable change in American drinking habits with respect to distilled spirits and wine from 1871 to 1915, but there was a progressive increase in the consumption of beer per capita during that period. Table II shows the per capita consumption of tax-paid alcoholic beverages from 1871 to 1948, with the exception of the National Prohibition era.

<sup>74</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>75</sup> Cherrington, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>76</sup> *Statistical Abstract of the United States* for 1906 (Washington, 1907), p. 687.

The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which debarred "the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors" for beverage purposes, was approved by thirty-six states by January, 1919. In accordance with the provisions of the amendment, national prohibition went into effect on January 20, 1920. The Volstead Act, which Congress passed over the veto of President Wilson, defined liquor as being "intoxicating" when it contained as much as one two-hundredth part of alcohol, and the act provided machinery for the enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment.<sup>77</sup>

National prohibition was unequally effective in different areas of the United States. Generally speaking, rural America was "dry" and urban America was "wet." A map prepared in 1924 by the Assistant Attorney-General of the United States, Mrs. Mabel Willebrandt, showed the degree of nonenforcement of prohibition in different parts of the country to vary from 5 per cent in Kansas, Utah, and Idaho, to 95 per cent in New York City.<sup>78</sup> Just how much liquor was consumed during the Prohibition era is quite impossible to determine. It is generally conceded that the amount diminished considerably during those years. But it appears that the drinking habits and attitudes of the general population had not sufficiently changed to insure the support or continuance of national prohibition, and the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed in 1933.

The per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages (tax-paid) since the repeal of the national prohibition

<sup>77</sup> National prohibition, particularly the reasons for its "failure," will be more fully treated in chap. v.

<sup>78</sup> "Where We Are Wettest," *Literary Digest*, LXXX (Feb. 23, 1924), 17.

TABLE II  
 APPARENT AVERAGE ANNUAL PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION  
 OF TAX-PAID DISTILLED SPIRITS, WINE, AND BEER IN  
 THE UNITED STATES, 1871-1948\*  
 (IN GALLONS)

YEAR	DISTILLED SPIRITS	WINE	BEER
1871-1880	1.39	.47	6.93
1881-1890	1.34	.48	11.37
1891-1895	1.37	.39	15.20
1896-1900	1.12	.36	15.53
1901-1905	1.39	.47	17.34
1906-1910	1.43	.62	19.81
1911-1915	1.42	.53	20.18
1916	1.37	.47	17.78
1917	1.62	.41	18.17
1918	.87	.49	14.77
1919	.79	.51	8.00
1920-1933	(Years of National Prohibition)		
1934	.33	.14	7.90
1935	.70	.30	10.45
1936	.81	.39	11.93
1937	1.03	.52	13.47
1938	1.00	.51	13.02
1939	.93	.55	12.41
1940	1.02	.66	12.58
1941	1.04	.70	12.42
1942	1.13	.79	14.18
1943	1.11	.84	15.96
1944	1.03	.73	17.97
1945	1.22	.73	18.86
1946	1.39	.87	18.56
1947	1.28	.77	18.08
1948	1.06	.79	18.58

\* Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1948, published by the U. S. Department of Commerce (Washington, 1949), p. 855.

law is given in Table II. The official statistics do not give so complete a picture as they once did, for two reasons. First, the illicit manufacture of distilled spirits seems to play a more significant role than in earlier years. About 11,500 illicit stills were seized in the United States annually for the period 1938-1942,



and an average of about 6,800 during the war and post-war years, 1943-1949.<sup>79</sup> It has been estimated that the production of illicit spirits during recent years has been from 25 to 50 per cent of the legal production for beverage use.<sup>80</sup> Secondly, since alcoholic beverages are consumed, generally speaking, only by individuals fifteen years of age and over, per capita rates based on the total population over a long period of time do not give an accurate picture of drinking trends. The percentage of persons under fifteen years of age in our population has progressively declined since 1871, whereas the percentage fifteen years and older has increased from year to year. A more reliable indication of trends may be expressed in terms of rates per capita of the population of drinking age. Such a trend is shown in Table III. There are no data for earlier years on the actual number of users of alcoholic beverages among persons fifteen years of age and older; so at present we cannot say that the actual per capita consumption of alcohol during recent years was greater or less than it was during the years from 1871 to 1915.

#### APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF USERS OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN THE UNITED STATES

No one knows exactly how many people in the United States use alcoholic beverages. Various attempts have been made to discover the approximate number. The study made by H. A. Ley<sup>81</sup> is one of the most reliable sources of information on this subject. Ley questioned ten thousand life-insurance policy-

<sup>79</sup> The Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue (issued by the U. S. Treasury Department), 1938 to 1949.

<sup>80</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>81</sup> "Incidence of Smoking and Drinking Among 10,000 Examinees," *Proceedings of the Life Extension Examiners*, II (May-June, 1940), 57-63.



TABLE III  
 APPARENT PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION OF TAX-PAID ALCOHOLIC  
 BEVERAGES BY POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OLDER,  
 UNITED STATES, 1871 TO 1948  
 (IN GALLONS)\*

YEAR	DISTILLED SPIRITS	WINE	BEER
1871-1880	2.27	.77	11.26
1881-1890	2.12	.76	17.94
1891-1895	2.12	.60	23.42
1896-1900	1.72	.55	23.72
1901-1905	2.11	.71	26.20
1906-1910	2.14	.92	29.27
1911-1915	2.09	.79	29.53
1916-1919	1.68	.69	21.63
1920-1933	(Years of National Prohibition)		
1934	.64	.36	13.58
1935	.96	.50	15.13
1936	1.30	.64	17.53
1937	1.43	.71	18.21
1938	1.32	.70	16.58
1939	1.38	.79	16.77
1940	1.48	.91	16.29
1941	1.58	1.02	17.97
1942	1.89	1.11	20.00
1943	1.46	.94	22.26
1944	1.69	.92	25.22
1945	1.95	1.13	25.97
1946	2.20	1.34	23.75
1947	1.69	.90	24.56
1948	1.56	1.11	23.77

\* Source: Years 1871-1945 from E. M. Jellinek, *Recent Trends in Alcoholism and in Alcohol Consumption* (New Haven, 1947), p. 8; years 1946-1948 from R. G. McCarthy and E. M. Douglass, *Alcohol and Social Responsibility* (New York, 1949), p. 46.

holders concerning their drinking habits. The policy-holders, at the expense of their insurance companies, had presented themselves for health examinations. They were assured that the personal information obtained would be treated with strict confidence, and there seems to be no reason why any should have desired to withhold information about their drinking habits. It might be pointed out that the people se-

lected for this study were representative of the age groups, occupations, economic brackets, and educational levels of the country as a whole.

Mr. Ley reported the following: irrespective of age, 60.4 per cent of the men and 33.5 per cent of the women stated that they used alcoholic beverages. After making adjustment for the age distribution in the United States, he concluded that alcohol was used by 57.3 per cent of the male population and 29.3 per cent of the female population in the age range of 15 to 60 years, or, by omitting sex classification, 43.5 per cent of the entire population of this age range. He also stated that of the drinkers who were investigated in this study, 80 per cent said they used alcohol at least once each week. The remaining 20 per cent used it less frequently.

Thus on the basis of the above figures it can be estimated that there were approximately forty million users of alcoholic beverages in the United States in 1940. Of this number it is probable that about twenty-seven million were men, and thirteen million were women. Jellinek estimated in 1947 that the number of users of alcoholic beverages had increased 35 per cent since 1940.<sup>82</sup>

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter an endeavor has been made to present a brief historical sketch of the use of alcoholic beverages among various peoples of the world, rather than to give a complete historical account. We have seen something of how drinking traditions and customs have gradually accumulated and developed from prim-

<sup>82</sup> E. M. Jellinek, *Recent Trends in Alcoholism and Alcoholic Consumption* (New Haven, 1947), p. 22.

itive times to the present day. It now appears that we may safely conclude that our modern drinking patterns are largely products of cultural evolution. Knowledge, ideas, standards, and values involved in the use of alcohol as a beverage have passed from generation to generation and thus have maintained the historical continuity of an alcoholic culture.

No attempt has yet been made to analyze the basic reasons for drinking or to point out the desires and needs which alcohol is supposed to satisfy. The underlying problem—why mankind uses alcoholic beverages—will be treated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III

# WHY MANKIND USES ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

IRRESPECTIVE OF HOW or where a human group may live, at any level and in any environment it is always found to engage in each of its many activities for the purpose of attaining a desired end. A study might be made of a community inhabiting an Arctic region, a tribe living in a tropical jungle, or a horde of the most backward of preliterate people, such as the aborigines of the island of Tasmania, and always it would be discovered that they were using a body of implements, following rules of behavior, and cherishing ideas and beliefs in order to reach certain goals, satisfy wishes, and meet needs. The same thing is true at all higher levels of development. The tools and behavior are perhaps more highly developed, but their purpose is equally functional. In other words, any element or trait in a cultural system has been assigned its place so that it may satisfy some need or wish of man. However, it must be recognized, as Malinowski has said:

The interests that supply the motive power and dictate the tasks of the group are at times physiological, as in food production, domestic life, and defense mechanisms. There are, however, other interests, values, and motives connected with science or with art which transcend any biological determinism. We are thus led to the fuller analysis as to what

the drives or motives of human beings are, and also as to principles and forces of human organization.<sup>1</sup>

The great majority of the known human societies of the earth have drunk some sort of alcoholic beverages. Such indulgence has been going on for many hundreds of years. Certainly some definite factors or forces must be operating underneath a practice so widespread and so enduring.

The thesis of this work is that alcoholic beverages exist in a society, as do all other elements or traits of culture, because it is felt that they perform a specific function or functions. They are intended to *do something*. Therefore the fundamental emphasis must be centered on the factors and forces at work which cause alcoholic beverages to be used in a group or society, regardless of whether the beverages do or do not perform the function for which they are intended. And so we now raise the question, Why do men drink beverage alcohol?

#### POPULAR EXPLANATIONS FOR DRINKING

There are many popular explanations which people ordinarily adduce as their reasons for drinking. Among the "reasons" most commonly heard are the following: "I drink because it makes me feel good," "I drink alcoholic beverages because I like their taste," "We drink because practically everybody in our group drinks," "I like to take a small drink before meals because it gives me a better appetite," "I drink when I am tired and worn out because it rests and relaxes me," "I drink because it helps me to forget my worries and unpleasant experiences," and "I drink because it enables me to be a better conversation-

<sup>1</sup> "Man's Culture and Man's Behavior," *Sigma Xi Quarterly*, XXIX (Oct., 1941), 185-193.

alist and thus a better social mixer." One or more of the above reasons or others may be given by the individual as an explanation for his drinking. They comprise at least a part of the individual's interpretation of the situation—what he feels he receives or expects to receive from drinking.

### SOME SCIENTIFIC "REASONS" FOR DRINKING

Many men who have done research on the use of alcoholic beverages and many men who have had years of clinical experience with drinkers have stated what they conceive to be the principal reasons for drinking. Table IV gives a list of some of the reasons for drinking, especially in the case of excessive drinking or alcohol addiction, which a few of these men have set forth.

TABLE IV  
REASONS FOR DRINKING

AUTHOR	STATEMENT
Strecker, E. A. and Chambers, F. T.	Alcohol is utilized as an escape from the responsibility and burden of mature emotional life and its decisions. (1938, p. 12)*
Waddell, J. A. and Haag, H. B.	Relief of discomfort and a feeling of well-being wherein the worries of today and the anxieties of tomorrow are cast aside with the substitution of calm indifference and pleasurable relaxation. (1940, p. 119)
Mapother, E.	Normal drinkers drink to get pleasure; morbid drinkers to evade pain. (1927-1928, p. 1346)
Tait, W. D.	Release from, or prevention of repression, and even a compensation for joys and pleasures missed. In the mental state produced by alcohol we find a rosy and comfortable world. (1930, p. 482)
Wall, J. H.	Alcohol offers an escape to the blissful state of infantile omnipotence. (1937, p. 952)
Patrick, G. T. W.	Intoxicating beverages furnish the easiest and cheapest means ever discovered for escape from reality into the lighter and freer world of one's fancies. (1916, p. 214)



AUTHOR	STATEMENT
Read, S. C.	Alcohol is taken to promote the social instincts and alleviate and narcotize the many mental conflicts to which we must all to some extent be victims. (1920, pp. 242-243)
Emerson, H.	To escape from the unpleasant or uncongenial features of an unavoidable environment or to be relieved of the insistence of worries and responsibilities is the object of him who drinks alcohol. (1936, p. 31)
Durfee, C. H.	Alcohol is essentially a drug, a narcotic, which by relaxing the control of the higher brain centers, dulls painful feelings or promotes pleasurable ones. (1937, p. 4)
Trotter, W.	In the tragic conflict between what he has been taught to desire, and what he has been allowed to get, a man has found in alcohol a sinister but effective peacemaker, a means of securing, for however short a time, some way out of the prison house of reality back to the Golden Age. (1920, p. 58)
Barnes, F. H.	Heredity no doubt gives some people neurotic tendencies and such patients find that excessive nervous manifestations are controlled to a degree by alcohol. (1935, p. 120)
Hart, H. H.	Drink in some cases seems a definite substitute for sexual satisfaction because of the diminished libido which results. (1930, p. 126)
Seliger, R. V.	As an escape from situations of life which he cannot face; as evidence of a maladjusted personality; as an escape from incurable physical pain, etc. (1938, p. 704)
Morris, R. T.	Desire for liberation of that part of the personality which is kept in check by convention. (1916, p. 450)
Meyer, Adolph	Sometimes the urge is one of repetition of satisfying or gratifying taste, effect, sociability, adventure, relief from shyness or other feelings. Success with minimal effort, the cultivation of self-pity and easy self-exhilaration, the reduction of guilty feelings, false standards of comparison with false solutions, are all apt to play a role. (1932, p. 287)
Henderson, J. L.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To be a "he man."</li> <li>2. To find a way of rebelling and allowing relief of destructive impulses.</li> <li>3. To obtain pleasure. (1940, p. 11)</li> </ol>

AUTHOR	STATEMENT
Carver, A. E.	Alcohol, by producing euphoria, blunting the critical power and progressively relaxing inhibitions, permits a flight from reality. (1931, p. 117)
Lamb, D.	Alcoholic drinks are frequently taken to overcome shyness and awkwardness. Some individuals take alcohol because the tavern offers company and comfort otherwise unobtainable for a large group of people. (1939, p. 167)

\* A complete citation of each author's work is given in the bibliography. Only the date of publication and page reference are cited in this table.

### FOUR GENERAL MOTIVES FOR DRINKING

The reasons for drinking as stated in the preceding pages (including the popular "reasons") describe what is generally felt to be the function of alcohol, i.e., what the drinker expects to receive from it. They may be resolved into four categories which would give us the general motives for drinking.

1. Acoholic beverages may be used as condiments or thirst-quenching drinks or simply to add color at meals and social gatherings. Since it is generally foreign to American habits to take wine and beer with meals, the practice is encountered only in limited circles in this country. But, such a usage is a national custom in certain countries: France, Germany, Italy, and others. The habit of serving alcoholic drinks with meals by certain peoples may be compared to other peoples' use of coffee, tea, or water with meals.

2. Alcoholic beverages may be used because of the feeling of exaltation which they induce. In such a case the desire may be to heighten fun and enthusiasm, release inhibitions, socialize, or celebrate. As Abraham Myerson says:

Men drink in celebration as well as for relief. They drink to lend ceremony, color, and fellowship to life, just as surely as to banish anxiety, dread, and frustration. They drink

out of recklessness and abandon which is not at all necessarily a compensation for an inherent caution and fatigue of spirit. They drink, too, because the inhibitions of life seem at times ridiculous and often alcohol represents not an *escape* but a *revolt* against the overstressed, perhaps necessary caution, decorum, and orderliness of existence.<sup>2</sup>

3. Alcoholic beverages may be used because of the narcotic, or depressant, effect which they produce. Here the desire may be for an escape from something, to banish anxieties and frustrations, to relieve tensions, or to get relief from physical pain.

4. Alcoholic beverages may be used because people desire to conform or feel they should conform to the social custom of using such drinks. The social pressure in a group or society where the custom of drinking is widespread often makes it difficult for an individual to abstain.

All the above statements pertain to the general motives for drinking. In the case of the alcohol addict deeper motives may be involved. They will be considered in the pages to follow. However, the reasons for drinking which have been listed are highly significant in that they furnish some insight into the values and meanings which alcoholic beverages have acquired in the history of the groups or societies which use them. They are not the underlying forces, the basic etiological factors, which have to do with the origin of the use of alcoholic beverages in a particular society. Though they are not the initial factors which start the process, they are important to an understanding of the problem in that they can give the general attitudes toward alcoholic drinks as objects to be desired or avoided.

<sup>2</sup> "Alcohol: A Study of Social Ambivalence," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 1 (June, 1940), 19.

## IMMODERATE USE OF AND ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL

In discussing the initial factors basic to the cause of the use of alcoholic beverages, writers on the subject usually separate the factors into those that have to do with moderate use and those that have to do with immoderate or "abnormal" use of alcohol. It is generally conceded that "normal" drinking is due largely to the customs and traditions of the country. Some writers divide alcohol addicts into two groups—primary addicts and secondary addicts. According to E. M. Jellinek,

In the primary addict, the dependence upon alcohol is practically immediate and is psychologically motivated although not necessarily without any physiological component; his inability to give up alcohol is to all intents an initial phenomenon. The secondary addict is initially not dependent upon alcohol and simply does not give it up because he does not seem to have any reason to do so. In the course of years, habituation develops; this makes him physically dependent and this physical dependence may then be rationalized into psychological dependence. The fact remains, however, that he is now an addict and, as far as medicine and society are concerned, he presents the same problem as the primary addict. This, and the fact that *secondary addicts are probably much more numerous than primary addicts*, lends importance to physiological theories of the genesis of such dependence. The importance of such theories, however, should not obscure the fact that they do not touch upon the initial causes.<sup>3</sup>

Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the underlying causes of immoderate use of or addiction to alcoholic beverages.

## GEOGRAPHICAL FORCES

Geographical forces have long been held responsible for the immoderate use of or addiction to alcohol.

<sup>3</sup> *Alcohol Addiction*, pp. 14-15. The italics have been added by the present author.



Henry Thomas Buckle was an advocate of this theory. He writes:

If we inquire what those physical agents are by which the human race is most powerfully influenced we shall find that they may be classed under four heads: namely, Climate, Food, Soil, and the General Aspects of Nature; by which last, I mean those appearances which, though presented chiefly to the sight, have through the medium of that or other senses, directed the association of ideas, and hence in different countries have given rise to different habits of National thought. To one of these four classes may be referred all the external phenomena by which Man has been affected.<sup>4</sup>

Buckle held that those "physical agents" were responsible for "the greater amount of drunkenness."<sup>5</sup> Ellsworth Huntington says that the great amount of drunkenness of white men in the tropics is "directly connected with the climate."<sup>6</sup> To explain the many cases of sobriety among the white men living in the tropics, Huntington says, "Such men almost invariably make frequent and protracted visits to the better climate of the North."<sup>7</sup> Clarence A. Mills also contends that "the threat of drinking is especially great among those who migrate from energizing climates into tropical heat," but then on the same page he says: "The hard driven people of cooler lands are most addicted to overuse of alcohol."<sup>8</sup>

It is possible that the physical environment of certain regions may have some indirect influence which occasionally may be regarded as one of the factors in-

<sup>4</sup> *History of Civilization in England* (New York, 1913), I, Part I, 29.

<sup>5</sup> *The Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of Henry Thomas Buckle*, ed. Grant Allen (London, 1885), I, 219.

<sup>6</sup> *Climate and Civilization* (New Haven, 1915), p. 45. See also Ellen Churchill Semple, *Influence of Geographical Environment* (New York, 1911), p. 626, for a similar view.

<sup>7</sup> Huntington. *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> *Climate Makes the Man* (New York, 1942), p. 107.

volved in the immoderate use of or addiction to alcoholic beverages. However, from factual observation and written history it is easily recognized that a correlation between geographical conditions and the use of alcohol, such as the geographical determinists maintain exists, is far from being definite and rigid. In regard to such a correlation it is possible to make the following statements:

First, the fluctuations in the immoderate use of and addiction to alcohol between various countries with similar climates and between various parts of the same country, between rural and urban districts, and between different social strata and groups (economic, occupational, religious, racial, cultural, national) are such that they cannot be accounted for through the influence of geographical conditions.

Second, the same may be said about fluctuations in the immoderate use of and addiction to alcohol within the same or different societies in time, as from year to year. Extraordinary increases or decreases in the excessive use of alcohol in a series of years, where the geographical conditions are relatively constant, are to be explained by other than geographical factors.

#### PHYSIOLOGICAL FACTORS

A number of theories suggest that certain physiological factors are the primary causes of the immoderate use of or addiction to alcohol. Certain writers have postulated predisposing physiological constitutional types. Earnest A. Hooton seems to be an exponent of this view in its extreme form. He holds that drunkenness "may be considered a weakness rather than an offense."<sup>9</sup> Apparently he looks upon addiction to al-

<sup>9</sup> *Crime and the Man* (Cambridge, Mass., 1939), p. 262.



cohol as the result of the biological inferiority of the organism. With reference to the problem of "salvaging civilization" ("checking the degenerative trends in human evolution") Hooton says, "It is nothing more than the relating of disease, whether mental or physical, to the varying anatomical types of the human organism."<sup>10</sup> In summing up the whole matter of antisocial behavior he says:

So I think that inherently inferior organisms are, for the most part, those which succumb to the adversities or temptations of their social environment and fall into anti-social behavior, and that it is impossible to improve and correct the environment to a point at which these flawed and degenerate human beings will be able to succeed in honest social competition.<sup>11</sup>

An examination of Hooton's study, *Crime and the Man*, to which the above references are made, will reveal that his procedure, interpretations, and conclusions are unsound in the light of the data and evidence with which he worked.<sup>12</sup> The answer to the problem of antisocial behavior, under which he included drunkenness, appears to be based, not on his data, which were inadequate, but rather on his belief in the biological inferiority of antisocial persons.

Other writers maintain that certain cases of alcohol addiction may be explained on the basis of predisposing physiological constitution. H. Crichton-Miller advocates this theory. He claims that there are hypopietic and subthyroid types of drinkers.<sup>13</sup> Dr. Robert S. Carroll also holds that the biological consti-

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>12</sup> Hooton's samples, especially his controls, were not sufficiently representative or large enough in numbers to warrant such sweeping conclusions as were made in his study.

<sup>13</sup> Jellinek, *Alcohol Addiction*, p. 16.

tutional inheritance of certain drinkers may explain the etiology of their addiction to alcohol. He says: "We conclude that the reaction to alcohol will be determined first, by the individual's heredity; second, by his reserve of nervous stability; third, by his biochemical conditions at the time."<sup>14</sup> With reference to drinkers, Dr. Carroll goes on to say that some are born "with a defective blood-brain barrier. Synapsedysfunction is an established tendency. With these the use of alcohol is dangerous, devastating. For them it is always a rapid poison. They will never attain any capacity for its temperate use. . . . They are fore-ordained problem or pathologic alcoholics."<sup>15</sup> Neither Crichton-Miller nor Carroll presents scientific evidence to show that certain types of drinkers are predisposed to alcohol addiction. We may conclude that any definite correlation between inherent biological inferiority and immoderate use of or addiction to alcohol has not yet been adequately shown.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Numerous psychological theories have been offered to explain alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism. The great majority of these theories are concerned almost entirely with concepts of personality. The investigators approached their studies mainly from the psychiatric or psychoanalytic point of view. The studies have usually been clinical in nature, and represent mainly the reflections of physicians, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts upon their cases. Among the few exceptions are Wall's studies of one hundred male and fifty female alcoholics,<sup>16</sup> Wittman's study of one hun-

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.* (New York, 1941), p. 122.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>16</sup> James H. Wall, "A Study of Alcoholism in Men," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, XCII (1936), 1389-1401; and "A Study of Alcoholism in Women," *ibid.*, XCIII (1937), 943-953.

dred alcoholics,<sup>17</sup> and Knight's study of thirty alcoholics.<sup>18</sup> The psychiatrists and psychoanalysts differ widely among themselves concerning the etiology of alcohol addiction. The following will give some idea of the variety of theories which they propose:

1. *Hereditary tendencies.* Although a very prominent place in modern scientific literature on alcohol addiction is devoted to hereditary constitutional weaknesses, no claim is made that alcohol addiction per se can be directly inherited. Those who advocate the theory that the alcohol addict has some inherited weakness hold that, in compensation for his weakness, he has turned to alcohol. With respect to alcohol addiction, K. Kolle claims, "The essential thing is to realize that the inherited disposition is the decisive factor."<sup>19</sup> Carroll says:

The majority of those whose lives are being complicated by drink are hereditary neurotics who sooner or later are confronted with some sense of inadequacy in school, in love, in business, in society, in competition; even in the spending of a legacy, they fail to measure up to their desires and seek artificial help.<sup>20</sup>

It is likely that the emphasis placed on the inherited weakness of the alcohol addict is a gross exaggeration, partly due to the fact that the cases studied are not typical of the alcoholics in the general population. Practically all the studies thus far have been of institutionalized patients, many of whom were suffering from various types of alcoholic psychoses. Only a small percentage of alcohol addicts are hospitalized, and

<sup>17</sup> Mary Phyllis Wittman, "Developmental Characteristics and Personalities of Chronic Alcoholics," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, XXXIV (July, 1939), 361-377.

<sup>18</sup> "Psychodynamics of Chronic Alcoholism," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, LXXXVI (1937), 538-548.

<sup>19</sup> Jellinek, *Alcohol Addiction*, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> Carroll, *What Price Alcohol?*, p. 9.

relatively few develop alcoholic psychoses; thus it is unsound to make a generalization from them and apply it to all addicts. All that can be concluded is about as follows, according to Jellinek:

The available evidence shows that the incidence of hereditary liability as well as of psychopathic disposition in the population of excessive drinkers is greater than in the general population. But that is all. The incidence is not so high that a general statement could be made of it nor has any evidence been produced to show that psychopathic disposition or a nonspecific hereditary factor necessarily leads to addiction. All one can say is that persons with such hereditary liability or with such dispositions have a greater probability of succumbing to the risks of addiction.<sup>21</sup>

2. *Personality traits listed by psychiatrists.* Among the personality characteristics of alcohol addicts and chronic alcoholics, which are considered influential factors, as listed mainly by psychiatrists, are the following: "emotional instability," "idealization, during childhood, of a domineering mother and fear of a stern, autocratic father," "inability to meet the demands of adult living," "a feeling of insecurity as evidenced by an insistent feeling of need for religious security and a strong feeling of sin and guilt," "weakness of will," and "lack of persistence." These personality characteristics are inadequate in explaining the etiology of alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism because they represent in the main the personality characteristics of the individual after he has become an alcohol addict. They may simply reflect the personality as modified by the use of alcohol. The important factors to discover are the personality characteristics of the person before he began to use alcohol excessively.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.



3. *Personality traits listed by psychoanalysts.* Numerous personality characteristics, looked upon as causative factors, of alcohol addicts and chronic alcoholics have been pointed out by those employing the psychoanalytic technique. Freud in 1905 pointed out the oral erotic aspects of alcohol addiction.<sup>22</sup> One of the most widely known theories of alcohol addiction is that which explains the etiology of the addiction in terms of repressed homosexuality. J. Tabori says: "The psychic reason for alcohol addiction is the incompletely repressed homosexuality which the individual cannot sublimate."<sup>23</sup> Karl A. Menninger is the exponent of the theory which explains alcohol addiction in terms of suicide. He holds that alcohol addiction is one of the "chronic and attenuated forms of self destruction." He says:

Thus alcohol addiction can be thought of not as a disease, but as a suicidal *flight from* disease, a disastrous attempt at the self-cure of an unseen inner conflict, aggravated but not primarily caused (as many think) by external conflict. It is literally true that the alcoholic, as he himself says, does not know why he drinks.<sup>24</sup>

The psychoanalytic technique probably does afford deep insight into the developmental factors of personality structure. However, the experience of the analyst is usually extremely limited both in numbers and types of drinkers, and his sample of drinkers is not sufficiently adequate to justify his reaching a conclusion concerning the personality make-up of alcohol addicts and chronic alcoholics in the general population.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>24</sup> *Man Against Himself* (New York, 1938), p. 168.

After analyzing thirty-seven studies which attempted to differentiate the personality traits of alcoholics from those of nonalcoholics, Sutherland, Schroeder, and Tordella concluded:

No satisfactory evidence has been discovered that justifies a conclusion that persons of one type are more likely to become alcoholics than persons of another type. This conclusion agrees with the clinical findings of Wexberg that "there is no alcoholic personality prior to alcoholism."<sup>24a</sup>

### A CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

It is generally agreed that moderate drinking is largely a matter of the prevailing customs of a group or society. In fact the evidence seems to indicate that all drinking, both moderate and excessive, is mainly a matter of the customs and traditions of groups and societies. The problem of understanding the use of alcoholic beverages is, then, essentially one of understanding human behavior, which is mainly learned behavior—cultural behavior. This theory of drinking does not imply that the various factors mentioned in the foregoing theories do not enter into the situation. As has been pointed out earlier, it is usually out of them, the physical, biological, and psychological factors, that the needs and desires of the members of the group or society emerge. But it is the cultural system that determines the type of responses which men may make and the satisfactions which they may seek, as the following pages will attempt to show.

### CULTURE DEFINES THE MEANS AND METHODS

The cultural system of any group or society sets forth approved methods by which its members may

<sup>24a</sup> Sutherland, Edwin H., H. G. Schroeder, and C. L. Tordella, "Personality Traits and the Alcoholic: A Critique of Existing Studies," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, XI (Dec., 1950), 559.



seek to satisfy their needs and desires. One group or society may adopt a single method, whereas another may adopt alternative methods for meeting a particular need or desire. In any case, definite boundaries to the ways by which a person may respond to his wants are usually established. Consider, for example, an individual who experiences a constant feeling of insecurity which results in frequent periods of worry or anxiety. It is possible that the feeling of insecurity may be the result of unfavorable geographical conditions, biological weaknesses, or psychological handicaps which the individual faces in his struggle to make a living. One or all of those factors may be operating in his situation. At any rate, the man is faced with a definite need or desire. He must do something to relieve himself of his anxiety. What does he do? That will largely depend upon the customs of the group or society in which he lives. In one group or society an alcoholic drink, by social definition, may be the ready-made method for achieving at least a momentary relief from worries. In another group or society religion may be, by social definition, the method by which individuals seek relief from worry. In such a case, a person may pray for help and strength, or he may receive comfort and strength by reading the passage in the Bible that says:

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on . . . Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?<sup>25</sup>

Or the individual may go to church and sing: "Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there." Again, another group or society may establish some means of

<sup>25</sup> Matt. 6:25-26.

social security whereby its members are relieved of certain types of worry or anxiety, such as those often brought about by sickness, unemployment, or old age. There are many methods by which an individual may seek to satisfy his needs and wishes, but he usually employs only those that are socially established and sanctioned.

#### CULTURE DEFINES THE FUNCTION OF ALCOHOL

It is culture that determines the function or functions which alcoholic beverages may perform in a particular society. This fact becomes more evident when it is recognized that such drinks do not perform the same function or have the same meaning in all groups or societies. An alcoholic beverage of identical form may have, by social definition, a particular function and meaning in one society, whereas in another society it may have an entirely different function and meaning. Consider, for example, the use to which wine may be put. By social definition it may have none, one, or all of the following uses in a particular society: a symbol for the blood of Christ at a communion service, a condiment or beverage with meals, a method by which heightened fun and enthusiasm may be produced at a social gathering, or a narcotic to enable people to escape, at least for a while, certain disagreeable life-situations.

#### CULTURE DETERMINES WHO MAY USE ALCOHOL

It is also culture that determines who within a given society may use alcoholic beverages. As was stated in an earlier chapter, there was a period in the early days of Rome when men under thirty years of age were forbidden to drink wine, and women of any

age were not permitted to drink it. Except on ceremonial occasions, only the elderly men in the Elgeyo Tribe of Kenya are permitted to drink beer, apparently the only intoxicant which the tribe possesses.<sup>26</sup> That varying social conventions govern drinking among different social classes in American society is evidenced by data gathered on a small American town by Dollard and Miller.<sup>27</sup> The drinking customs among the four social classes which they observed were as follows:

1. Both men and women in the lower class use alcoholic beverages. However, the men seem to be able to drink with more freedom from criticism than the women. There is no urgency among the men to "drink like a gentleman" since there is little or no punishment for overindulgence. Getting drunk is socially accepted. The members of the lower class drink episodically—ordinarily when money is available with which to buy liquor. Were the social customs of this group unknown, the drinking habits of its members might be attributed mainly to certain personality traits or some other specific factor.

2. Lower middle-class individuals drink alcoholic beverages little or not at all. The people who compose this group have definite religious scruples against drinking, and in addition are often afraid that they will be looked upon as lower-class people if they drink.

3. So far as drinking is concerned, a sharp line of distinction between men and women is drawn in the upper middle class. The men drink quite freely among themselves, particularly in men's clubs, but the

<sup>26</sup> J. A. Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>27</sup> Neal E. Miller and John Dollard, *Social Learning and Imitation* (New Haven, 1941), pp. 7-8. The authors state: "The statements above describe norms; within each class there are deviant individuals and in some cases, deviant cliques" (p. 7).

custom of men and women drinking together is not sanctioned. When an alcoholic beverage is offered, upper middle-class wives are expected to refuse it gracefully.

4. In the upper class the use of alcoholic beverages carries no moral significance. Both men and women drink, and they often drink together. But there is a definite code involved in the drinking habits of the upper-class people: each person is socially permitted to drink a considerable amount, but he must "drink like a gentleman." When he permits his drinking to result in disorderly or aggressive conduct, such as is frequently typical of lower-class people, he may be punished with an extreme amount of social contempt.

Miller and Dollard's study further reveals that it is necessary for a person to change his drinking habits when he moves from one social class to another. Unless he is willing to be looked upon as vulgar, he must learn to give up his drinking if he moves into the lower middle class from the lower class. The men of the lower middle class who move into the upper middle class must learn to drink, at least when they associate with men. The upper middle-class people who move into the upper class must learn to become very liberal with respect to the use of alcoholic beverages; otherwise they will be considered "stuffy." "What is rewarded in one social class is punished in another."<sup>28</sup>

#### SOCIAL TRADITION AND SOCIAL PRESSURE

Social tradition and social pressure are among the extremely important factors involved in the use of alcoholic beverages, irrespective of the degree to which they may be used. This fact is usually unquestioned

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.



when applied to moderate, or "normal," drinking. The evidence indicates that the case is the same with respect to excessive drinking, alcohol addiction, and chronic alcoholism.

The alcohol addict and the chronic alcoholic are generally looked upon, particularly by psychiatrists, as attempting to escape from certain disagreeable conditions in their environment and in their own life organization. The alcohol addict or chronic alcoholic is diagnosed as being a person who "seeks to *escape* from his neurosis, from his depression, his frustrations, his dissatisfactions with life, and all the socially unacceptable and personally distasteful trends in his own character."<sup>29</sup>

There is, however, considerably more to alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism than an attempt to escape from disagreeable life-situations. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that, as Dr. Abraham Myerson has pointed out, there are at least two groups in the population of the United States who, in view of the prevalence among them of neuroses, psychoses, and psychopathic personalities, would appear to have as much need for escape as any; and yet both groups are relatively free from alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism. These two groups are the Jewish people and the females of the human race.

Whatever index of alcohol addiction one takes—arrests for drunkenness or confinement to a hospital because of alcohol addiction or chronic alcoholism—he finds that the Jewish people are relatively free from this "disease." Yet on the basis of facts, one cannot say

<sup>29</sup> Myerson, "Alcohol: A Study of Social Ambivalence," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, I (June, 1940), 16. Dr. Myerson gave the above statement as being representative of the tendency in psychiatry, not as representative of his own thought regarding the matter.

that the Jews have been free from frustration, insecurity, and anxiety which would encourage the use of some means of escape. Certainly in this case it is clear that difficult life-situations alone do not explain alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism.

Moreover, alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism are considerably less common among the females of the human race than among the males. For every one female alcohol addict or chronic alcoholic in the United States there are seven or eight male alcohol addicts or chronic alcoholics.<sup>30</sup> The ratio of these "diseases" varies from country to country. In England, the ratio is two men to one woman; in Switzerland, twelve to one; and in Norway, twenty-three to one.<sup>31</sup> Yet, again, there is no evidence to indicate that women do not have their full share of frustrations, anxieties, and conflicts. This is shown by the fact that the commitments to mental hospitals are substantially the same for both sexes.

Social tradition and social pressure seem to be the factors which operate to bring about a low degree of alcohol addiction and chronic alcoholism among the Jews and the females of the human race. Among the Jews there is an old tradition against the excessive use of alcohol. Three explanations for this tradition have been offered. The first is a religious one which finds the following expression in the Talmud: "Wine should be taken only with meals; in between meals it intoxicates."<sup>32</sup> Thus one theory holds that the Jews are a

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> Ernest R. Mowrer, *Disorganization, Personal and Social* (Chicago, 1942), pp. 435-436.

<sup>32</sup> Frank J. Curran, "Personality Studies in Alcoholic Women," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, LXXVI (Dec., 1937), 647; cited from W. M. Feldman, "Alcohol in Ancient Jewish Literature," *British Journal of Inebriety*, XXIV (Jan., 1927).



sober people because they do most of their drinking while eating. The second explanation was offered by Immanuel Kant. He claimed that the Jews, forming minority groups among other peoples and thus being exposed to constant censure and siege, must avoid, in the interest of their racial welfare, anything that would make them conspicuous or bring forth unfavorable criticism. The third explanation has been advanced by Robert Freed Bales. He maintains that drinking among the Jewish people is "an act of communion" and thus drunkenness is regarded as "indecent." Bales says:

In the Jewish culture the wine is sacred and drinking is an act of communion. The act is repeated again and again and the attitudes toward drinking are all bound up with attitudes toward the sacred in the mind and emotions of the individual. In my opinion this is the central reason why drunkenness is regarded as so "indecent"—so unthinkable—for a Jew. Rational precaution also probably plays a part, but the ritual use is the main mechanism which builds in the necessary emotional support for the attitudes. Drunkenness is a profanity, an abomination, a perversion of the sacred use of wine. Hence the idea of drinking "to become drunk" for some individualistic or selfish reason arouses a counteranxiety so strong that very few Jews ever become compulsive drinkers.<sup>33</sup>

At any rate, whatever the reason may be, although social and ceremonial drinking is an accepted custom among the Jews, the Jew who drinks excessively or becomes drunk loses status in his group.

The following story may illustrate the typical Jewish attitude toward the use of alcoholic beverages. During the course of this investigation the author had a number of interviews with a young Jewish man who was experiencing a severe emotional disturbance which

<sup>33</sup> "Culture Differences in Rates of Alcoholism," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, VI (March, 1946), 493.

was precipitated by a frustrated love affair. The young man had fallen in love with and become engaged to a young woman whose background was considerably different from his own. He and the young woman announced their engagement to their respective parents. His father and mother gave their consent and blessing to the proposed marriage. The young woman's parents violently objected to the proposed union, saying that they would disinherit their daughter if she disregarded their wishes in the matter. After a period of several weeks, the young woman informed her fiancé that she would have to abide by the wishes of her parents and thus break her engagement to him. Although this young Jew was a moderate drinker of hard liquor, wine, and beer and even though he had a pint of whisky in his room, he would not drink during this period of emotional disturbance. Rather, he consulted a doctor and secured a sedative for his nerves. He also increased his smoking from seven or eight to forty or fifty cigarettes a day. During the period that he was experiencing great anxiety and frustration he told the author of this work that he had a strong desire to drink but was afraid to do so lest it might lead him into greater difficulties. Apparently he was afraid that if he drank under such conditions his drinking would be so excessive that it might result in social disapproval and some form of social ostracism.

The same sort of situation largely obtains with women. It is true that they have become emancipated from many inhibitory influences handed down from the past, but there remains a prevalent feeling in most circles that "woman is expected to be nicer than man in her conduct." An example of what could occur in the average American university community will illustrate

the prevailing attitudes. If a half-dozen young college men went out on a wild party and became highly intoxicated and then went through the streets creating considerable social disturbance, they would ordinarily not be severely punished or greatly condemned. Many men, leading citizens, would likely say: "Well, boys will be boys; in fact, I was once a boy myself." The six young men might be mildly reprimanded, but they would also be spared the payment of any heavy penalty. On the other hand, suppose six young women from the college went out and did the same thing. The event would doubtless precipitate a crisis. The newspapers would doubtless carry editorials on "the horrible incident." Ministers would pound their pulpits and ask, "What is the world coming to?" The social condemnation and punishment of the young women would be immeasurably greater than that of boys. Anticipating full well the social attitude and treatment which would be directed against them, women do not ordinarily permit themselves to become involved in such situations. Social custom and social pressure are thus among the principal factors which have prevented excessive drinking among women.

#### ALCOHOL AND TWO INDIAN GROUPS OF CENTRAL AMERICA

The anthropologist Ruth Bunzel presented a striking example of the force of social attitude concerning the use of alcoholic beverages as it influenced the drinking habits of two Indian groups in Central America.<sup>34</sup> Dr. Bunzel gathered her facts from the Indian villages of Santo Tomas Chichicastenango, in Guatemala, and Chamula, in the State of Chiapas, Mexico. These two villages are located in inaccessible regions of the Cen-

<sup>34</sup> "The Role of Alcoholism in Two Central American Cultures," *Psychiatry*, III (1940), 361-383.

tral American highlands. Except for the fifty mestizo families of Chichicastenango, the inhabitants are full-blooded Indians, who speak related dialects of Maya. Great racial pride is found among the Indians of this area, and they strongly resist the encroachment of white civilization upon them.

In Central America, according to Dr. Bunzel, the widespread addiction to alcohol can be understood only as we bear in mind its special historical background. The ancient Aztecs and the people who came under their influence employed intoxicating beverages as a definite part of their religious worship. Drinking was permitted only in worship of the gods; secular drinking was not tolerated. There were heavy penalties for drunkenness, which in accordance with the severity of the Aztec laws was a capital offense. From this punishment only men and women over seventy years of age were exempt. Drinking still persists as a form of religious worship, but modern conditions have brought about widespread secular drinking.

The introduction of the stronger alcoholic drinks by the Spaniards was completely demoralizing to the Indians of Central America. The Spaniards quickly recognized the advantage of the use of alcohol and utilized it as a tool of imperialism. Dr. Bunzel says: "Alcohol was one thing the Spaniards had which the Indians craved, and for which they would contract debts and sell themselves and their children into slavery."

The areas of intensive cultivation of coffee, sugar, cotton, and tropical fruits are situated in the unhealthy regions at a considerable distance from the large centers of the indigenous population who live in the foothills and mountains. The plantation owners of Central



America must therefore secure their labor supply from the highland villages. Many of these villages are self-sustaining or industrially so specialized that they are able to supply their basic needs through the ancient system of intervillage barter. Frequently *aguardiente* ("white mule"—a strong raw distillate of sugar) is the only considerably felt need which cannot be secured through aboriginal trade. The payment for intoxicating drinks forms the bulk of the expense for all social ceremonies, such as baptisms, marriages, housewarmings, funerals, and the celebration of saints' days. It was largely to finance these ceremonies, rather than to feed and clothe themselves, that the Indians contracted to labor on the plantations. Until the whole contract-labor system was abolished in Guatemala and Mexico, it was customary to imprison great numbers of Indians and also impose heavy fines on them because of drunkenness. The plantation owners would then have them released from prison and pay their fines, which the victims had to work off on the plantation. To prevent the laborer from working off his debt, the consumption of alcoholic drinks was encouraged by the plantation owner or overseer. As a coffee planter remarked, "Take *aguardiente* away from the Indian and what will become of coffee?" Thus alcohol is now everywhere in Central America considered an essential part of Indian culture. However, its role is not everywhere the same: there are different patterns of drinking and different pictures of drunkenness.

The use of alcoholic beverages at Chichicastenango is confined to market days and the many festivals of which it forms one of the most conspicuous features. There is a market each Sunday that draws crowds from



all the neighboring towns. Dr. Bunzel says: "For drunkenness itself the Indians have no feelings of censure or disgust. The drunk is always treated with kindness and consideration." The whole town is in varying degrees of intoxication for a day or a week during the fiestas.

In Chamula, drinking is a social act. The solitary drinker or the man who drinks while others abstain is as unknown as the total abstainer. And drinking is always ceremonial. Drinking forms a part of every ceremony, religious or social—the worship of the saints, the healing of the sick, the celebration of baptism or marriage, the closing of a business deal, and the completion of a journey. Even the drinking that takes place along the roadside or at the market is ceremonious. Alcoholic beverages receive no condemnation. They are considered a necessity, and thus have no critics. The alcohol addict is the norm. The inclination to drink is developed in Chamula in very early childhood.

#### AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD ALCOHOL

In the United States there are conflicting mores concerning the use of alcoholic beverages even in the same community. This may be due to the fact, as Von Ogden Vogt points out, that in America we have a diversity of origins and ideals and thus have not developed universally definite and definable customs.<sup>35</sup> Our society is still in the stage which may be characterized as "nondescript and discordant." Vogt says: "We are too large, too new, and too composite in race and religion to have reached a describable unity in life."<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Art and Religion* (New Haven, 1921), pp. 13, 16.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Myerson holds that there are two trends—hedonism and asceticism—which have brought about an ambivalence of human attitude and opinion regarding sex and alcohol.<sup>37</sup> Hedonism represents the worship and seeking of personal pleasure and satisfaction. Asceticism stresses efficiency as the goal of life, and thus places the emphasis upon “duty, religion, work, and the sober activities.” The result is that at least two sets of forces impinge upon the members of society. The one extols and sings the praises of alcohol. The other denounces it and points out that the very pleasures and satisfactions which alcohol gives are a “snare and a delusion, a trap to imprison” the drinker.

Alcoholic beverages have had a place in American culture throughout the history of this country. Various patterns and practices of drinking are deeply embedded in our traditions and customs. The custom of drinking is transmitted from one generation to the next, from one group to another, and from one social stratum to another. Although it is possible that an ambivalence of attitude has developed regarding the use of alcoholic beverages, it seems that the man who drinks, except perhaps to the point of drunkenness, is in no manner going contrary to the dominant social customs of American society in general. Such appeared to be the case even during the days of national prohibition, because then we tolerated to a large degree what we had prohibited. So apparently there is much truth in the words which Walter Lippmann wrote in 1931:

We find ourselves accepting in their lawless form the very things which in lawful form we repudiate, having in the end to deal not only with all the vices we intended to abolish but

<sup>37</sup> “Alcohol: A Study of Social Ambivalence,” pp. 13-20.

with additional dangers which arise from having turned over their exploitation to the underworld.<sup>38</sup>

It seems that the drinking mores of the population as a whole had not changed to the extent that a prohibition law covering the entire country could be enforced.

In the United States the influence of custom regarding the use of alcoholic beverages has long been what Ernest Mowrer recently pictured it to be:

The custom of drinking together to symbolize common feeling and unity is almost universal in present-day culture. The business man celebrates the conclusion of a business deal with a drink. The host serves drinks as a mark of hospitality. Weddings are celebrated by toasts to the bride and groom; the birth of a baby, victory in war or in sport, future success and achievement, all these call for the common enjoyment of liquor. . . . Disaster and disappointment find their solvent in alcohol. Joy and happiness find elevation and release at the hands of this magic libation. He who refuses to have a drink and be a good fellow spurns the camaraderie of his fellowmen and sets himself apart as superior or eccentric.

. . . . Thus embedded in the culture pattern is the notion that in alcohol is magic, which in sorrow and in joy, in elation and in depression, in rebellion against the misery of travail and the restraints which hem one in, frees the human spirit and permits it to soar into the heavens unhampered by the ills of the flesh.<sup>39</sup>

#### INFLUENCE OF FASHION

Certainly fashion has become one of the strong factors encouraging the widespread use of alcoholic drinks. This is to be noted in a number of respects. In present-day society, as Thorstein Veblen said: "The members of each stratum accept as their ideal of decency the scheme of life in vogue in the next higher

<sup>38</sup> "The Underworld, A Stultified Conscience," *Forum*, LXXXV (Feb., 1931), p. 65.

<sup>39</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 263-264.

stratum, and bend their energies to live up to that ideal."<sup>40</sup> In art and music, on the stage and screen, the rich and influential have been depicted in artistically alluring surroundings indulging in the "joys" of alcohol. As Harry S. Warner says:

The association of choice wines and liquors with "high society," with the pleasures of the rich and successful, the banquets of the elite, the formalities of official receptions all give intoxicated pleasure, in view of the masses, a halo of dignity and importance.<sup>41</sup>

Consequently, it is likely that the majority of people who otherwise have no desire for alcoholic beverages drink because they feel that it is the socially acceptable and expected thing to do. Their interest is in status, not in alcohol. They want to do what "everybody who is anybody" is doing. In the eighteenth century it was quite fashionable to use snuff. During those days a man secured the finest snuffbox he could afford. He then used the box and snuff as an aid in his social intercourse. Maybe he liked snuff, or maybe he hated it. His main interest was not snuff; it was that other people might think well of him. So, he, too, was primarily interested in status.

#### LIQUOR ADVERTISING

Undoubtedly, one of the most important factors influencing the widespread use of alcoholic beverages is the high-pressure promotion methods employed by the liquor industry. The manufacturers of alcoholic beverages, as is the case with virtually all large business concerns, are intent on greater and greater profits.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Abraham Myerson, "Significance of Social Attitude," *International Student*, XXXIX (Feb., 1942), 105.

<sup>41</sup> *Alcoholic Culture: Should It Be Retained?* (Washington, 1939), p. 5.



After a comprehensive study of the alcohol problem immediately following repeal, Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott wrote: "The profit motive is the core of the problem."<sup>42</sup> Whether or not the desire for greater financial gain is "the core of the problem," it certainly must be looked upon as one of the most important factors in the total situation.

Referring to the attempts to regulate the liquor trade prior to national prohibition, Edward A. Ross speaks of how the alcoholic beverage industry expressed its urge for profits:

It came as a "big business" intent on profits—always more profits. From being shrinking and apologetic, it became brazen and aggressive. It no longer pleaded humbly for leave to assuage existing thirsts. In order to "promote business" it deliberately and methodically set itself to create new thirsts. It advertised, gave away samples, subsidized convivial organizations, encouraged festal customs of a "damp" character, planted saloons in new places, and brought them into a close partnership with the great social plagues, gambling and prostitution.<sup>43</sup>

Preceding prohibition, advertising campaigns and numerous forms of publicity were conducted by the liquor industry. Vast promotion campaigns that appealed to virtually every conceivable desire for liquor were carried on. The advertising of that era was replete with exaggerated false medical and therapeutic claims, in such statements as "Cures La Grippe and Consumption," "Better than all other medicines,"

<sup>42</sup> Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott, *Toward Liquor Control* (New York, 1933), p. 61.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted by Harry S. Warner, "Selling Alcoholic Release," *International Student*, XXXVIII (1941), 132, from "Prohibition as a Sociologist Sees It," *Intercollegiate Statesman*, XIX (Oct., 1921), 8-12.



and "Coughs, colds, grip, asthma, bronchitis, consumption speedily cured."<sup>44</sup>

Since the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, newspaper, magazine, and radio advertising of alcoholic beverages has reached gigantic proportions. Harry S. Warner says:

A Baltimore daily carried 520 inches of liquor advertising in one day, 268 of food, 127 of department stores, and 114 of autos and accessories. Of a total of 1,523 inches, the liquor was about 33 per cent. A New York daily carried 675 inches of liquor advertising, 465 clothing, 368 department stores, 219 autos and accessories, 212 amusements, out of a total of 2,998 inches that day.<sup>45</sup>

The brewers alone in the United States spent \$21,058,000 for advertising in 1940, according to information released by the Research Council of America.<sup>46</sup>

It seems that present-day liquor advertising has at least two major aims: to advance sales and to increase and strengthen social approval of drinking patterns. Squires says:

Boldly, the liquor magazines express their objective, to make steady customers at the first possible moment of our boys at the front.

Speaking for the makers, the "Brewers' Digest Magazine," in its leading editorial, May, 1941 (page 19), explains:

"The opportunity presented to the brewing industry is so obvious that it is superfluous to go into detail. . . . Here is a chance for brewers to cultivate a taste for beer in millions of

<sup>44</sup> W. S. Alexander, "Seeking to Control Advertising of Intoxicating Beverages," *International Student*, XXXVII (1940), 147. Condensed from the Annual Report of the Federal Alcohol Administrator, W. S. Alexander, to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, Jan. 6, 1940.

<sup>45</sup> Warner, "Selling Alcoholic Release," p. 136.

<sup>46</sup> F. D. L. Squires, *The Truth about Alcohol in this Hour of National Emergency* (Chicago, 1942), p. 8.

young men who will eventually constitute the largest beer-consuming section of our population."<sup>47</sup>

It is not likely that propaganda has ever been so subtle, artistic, and suggestive as that found in attempts to influence thinking and conduct regarding various alcoholic beverages. No charges for advertising space in magazines seem to be too great for the distillers' or brewers' full-page, highly colored, artistically portrayed appeals. Every imaginable device is used to catch the reader's attention: celebrated names, famous works of art, references to historical events and sites.

One of the most subtle suggestions conveyed by liquor advertisements is that the person who does not drink is of an inferior social standing. Consider, for example, the following liquor advertisements: "A Welcome Guest in America's Finest Homes"; "Preferred in the Best Circles"; "To please your guests and bring honor on your house." A type of appeal addressed exclusively to women is represented in an extremely interesting advertisement published by the United Brewers' Industrial Foundation in the fall of 1941. This excellent example of the technique of liquor advertising deserves to be quoted in full. It appeared in *Liberty*, *Collier's*, *Life*, and the *Woman's Home Companion*, bearing at the top the picture of a very attractive woman:

*How should an intelligent woman feel about beer & ale? Every modern-minded wife and mother should know the truth about beer and form an honest and unbiased judgment as to the place it should hold in her life.*

*"A girl who uses face-powder is fast!" . . . "A lady who doesn't wear petticoats is no lady at all!" . . . "A dress that*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

*reveals the ankles is immodest!" Such out-dated opinions are nonsense to the modern-minded woman. Yet the same sort of nonsense is still put forth on the subject of beer by those who would ban it from the thoughtful consideration of woman.*

BEER should neither be praised nor blamed for qualities other than its own.

Brewed from rich, wholesome grains and fragrant hops, beer is a product of Nature. Through the centuries, philosophers have rated it one of Nature's blessings to mankind. They have called it "the beverage of moderation."

Today, that definition is approved by science itself. Tests made in the laboratories of a great research institution indicate that beer, used with normal good sense, is *not* an intoxicating beverage.

#### BEER AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When children grow up and reach manhood and womanhood, their interests broaden, they begin to explore and appraise the outside world. If a mother is truly wise, she will make home so attractive to her young people, during those critical years, that they will enjoy entertaining friends in their home. . . . instead of seeking less wholesome entertainment elsewhere.

Kindly, mellow beer can be of great help. Served with a mother's approval and understanding, it becomes an asset in normal, pleasant, friendly gatherings of young people.

Ban this beverage of moderation from your home and you must face this fact:

Your children . . . no longer children now, but budding men and women . . . will make the decision of when and what to drink, outside your home, outside your influence, outside your help.

Then, there is the hospitable place beer can hold in your own life, your woman's world of entertaining, bridge, and friendships.

#### BEER AND YOU

When you entertain, nothing is easier to serve than beer . . . nothing is more economical. Just a step to the icebox and the cool, fragrant brew is ready to serve to your guests.

Contrary to the belief of many, beer is not a fattening food. An eight-ounce glass of beer contains 108 calories. Few beverages, suitable for entertainment, contain fewer. Remember that fact, and you will no longer need to discipline your natural liking for beer.

Served with tempting snacks, cool mellow beer will enhance your reputation as a skillful charming hostess.

\* \* \* \* \*

And so, in relation to your family, your friends, and yourself . . . beer should have a pleasant place in your life . . . and can do much to make it saner, sweeter, more worth living. *The brewers of America are eager to have beer win the place it deserves in the confidence of forward-looking women, a beverage of moderation for the nation.* As a tolerant and modern-minded woman, won't you help with understanding and support of the brewers' "clean-up or close-up" program . . . to prevent abuses wherever they occur in the retailing of beer and ale. It is described in a booklet sent free on request.<sup>48</sup>

Experience has shown that there is much truth in the saying "it pays to advertise." Undoubtedly the masses of the American people are responding to modern advertisements of alcoholic beverages. Liquor advertising is one of the most important factors which are working to increase and strengthen social approval of drinking.

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter data have been presented which may enable us to understand more clearly why mankind uses alcoholic beverages. An attempt has been made to present fairly and accurately various theories which have been advanced as answers to that question, and then an endeavor has been made to show the inadequacy of those theories. The conclusion of the present author is that the determining factor involved

<sup>48</sup> *Collier's*, CVIII (Sept. 20, 1941), 53.

in the use of alcoholic beverages is culture. This does not mean that other factors, such as physical, biological, and psychological forces, are not involved. To some degree they all enter into the total situation. It is perhaps those factors that usually produce the needs and desires which alcohol, in many societies, is supposed to satisfy. It is the group or society, however, that determines whether alcohol or something else will be employed to satisfy those needs. The members of any group or society ordinarily use alcoholic beverages only because such beverages have been set up by social definition and social sanction as a means by which certain needs and desires may be met.



## CHAPTER IV

# THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON THE INDIVIDUAL

THE BEHAVIOR of human beings, as has been pointed out earlier in this work, is based largely on custom and tradition. A particular culture pattern or culture element may be taken for granted and thus may be employed for many generations without being subjected to any serious examination. It may or it may not be serving the purpose for which it was adopted, it may have outlived the usefulness which it once had, or it may be having unintended consequences that remain long unrecognized.

It is only within relatively recent years that any systematic efforts for arriving at scientifically established facts regarding the personal and social consequences of the use of alcoholic beverages have been attempted. Many answers to questions concerning the use of alcoholic drinks are now being offered to the public; some of those answers are simply individual opinions, some are conjectures, and others are scientific facts clearly proved.

From the functional point of view, the justification for the use of alcoholic beverages must be determined by their effects on the individual and on society. Dr. Horatio M. Pollock puts it this way:

If it is found that the taxes paid by the liquor traffic are not largely extracted from the earnings of the poor; if it is

found that the drink habit makes workers in all occupations more reliable and more efficient; if it is found that the free use of alcoholic beverages promotes health and good citizenship and lessens crime and accidents; if it is found that the liquor traffic as a whole constitutes a real asset in the balance sheet of human welfare—if these things are found, then the liquor traffic should be encouraged, and everyone, both young and old, should form the drink habit. If the findings of the study do not reveal the benefits mentioned, but the opposite, appropriate action should be taken.<sup>1</sup>

So at this point the question may be raised, What are the benefits of alcohol? This chapter is devoted to an evaluation, in the light of modern scientific knowledge, of the effects of the use of alcohol on the individual, and the succeeding chapter will deal with the effects on society.

Considering all the problems involved in the use of alcohol, perhaps none has received more attention from research than that of what happens to the individual's body, mind, and behavior after its use. Information is still lacking on certain phases of the question, and controversies reign over other phases. Even so, a large body of reliable data is available.

After alcohol has been swallowed, since it requires no digestion, it passes directly through the lining membranes of the stomach and small intestines into the circulating blood. Through the blood it is distributed throughout the body. The alcohol makes its appearance in the blood within a few minutes after it is drunk and continues to be present until it is oxidized or eliminated through the breath and urine.

The maximum concentration of alcohol and the percentage found at a given time in the blood depend upon a number of factors—the quantity of the bev-

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Diseases and Social Welfare* (Utica, N. Y., 1941), p. 222.

erage consumed, its alcoholic strength, the presence or absence of food in the stomach, the fatty content of the food that may be present, previous habituation to alcohol, and bodily rest or exercise during the next two or three hours after drinking.<sup>2</sup>

#### ALCOHOL AS A FOOD

The fact that alcohol can act as a body fuel brings it into the category of food.<sup>3</sup> But as Haggard and Jellinek say: "The fact that it is a food carries no implication of its merit as a food."<sup>4</sup> It liberates energy only for the immediate needs of the body; but it cannot be stored for future use. Alcohol does not function in the creation, growth, building, and repair processes as do meats, fats, and sugars.<sup>5</sup> It must also be recognized that alcohol has certain drug and poison effects upon the human body which are not present in other foods. Contrary to popular opinion regarding the food value of beer, in 1913 the following statement appeared in the *United States Brewers Year Book*: "Chemists and brewers admit that practically the food value of alcohol and even of beer is inconsiderable. The quantity necessary to nourish the system would be so large as to act as a poison."<sup>6</sup> Dr. Haven Emerson says:

Alcohol is not included in the list of some thirty-seven food essentials known to be desirable to ensure healthy growth and activity of the human body from prenatal life in the mother's body to advanced old age. This is because alcohol, although in a strictly limited sense it can be spoken of as a

<sup>2</sup> Haven Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man* (New York, 1936), p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8; C. C. Weeks, *Alcohol and Human Life* (London, 1938), p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* (New York, 1942), p. 78.

<sup>5</sup> Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

fuel foodstuff, is in no sense, under conditions of health, necessary or desirable as a food. It is never, except from ignorance, included among the foods of children's diet. It is almost universally excluded from the diet of persons devoted to athletic excellence or to skill requiring a high degree of rapidity, accuracy, or endurance of muscular response to the brain. It is not advised by physicians as an article of diet for healthy persons of any age.<sup>7</sup>

Not only does alcohol have scarcely any merit when used as a food, but there are a number of dangers and disadvantages in so using it. Some of those dangers and disadvantages, especially when alcohol is used to any considerable degree, are as follows: (1) the impairment of the functions of the central nervous system, (2) the interference with the normal functioning of the digestive system, (3) the loss of appetite for the foods necessary for health and efficiency, (4) the risk of forming the alcohol habit.

#### ALCOHOL—A NARCOTIC OR A STIMULANT?

The medical profession for many years regarded alcohol as a stimulant, and it is still so regarded by many laymen. However, "it has been scientifically demonstrated that alcohol scarcely deserves its reputation as a stimulant, and such reputation is largely due to tradition, and to the subjective misinterpretation of pleasant alcoholic sensations."<sup>8</sup> Innumerable studies sustain the conclusion that alcohol is a narcotic and not a stimulant. A false feeling of stimulation arises because the lower nervous centers are released from the control of the higher by the narcotization of the latter. Thus the increased muscular activity which occurs after the drinking of alcohol is due to loss of control

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Edward A. Strecker and F. T. Chambers, *Alcohol—One Man's Meat* (New York, 1938), p. 5.

over the higher nerve centers and not to stimulation. Regarding its depressant effect, Dr. Haven Emerson says:

Alcohol in all strengths and under practically all experimental and so-called natural conditions can be shown to exert a depressant effect on the tissues of the nervous system. This is its dominant and almost exclusive action, and it is for the effects thus created that it is used as a beverage and prescribed as a drug, all other actions being secondarily related to its primary depressant effects.<sup>9</sup>

### THE USES OF ALCOHOL AS A MEDICINE

In its various forms, especially as whisky, brandy, and wine, alcohol was employed for a long time as a medicine for numerous ailments, from common colds to tuberculosis, and from chills to snake bites. Modern scientific knowledge shows that such use was based on the unfounded assumption that alcohol is a stimulant, that it improves respiration, and that it adds to the strength of the body in general.<sup>10</sup> Strecker and Chambers say:

In recent years, alcohol has been placed under the cold, revealing light of scientific research. As a result, it has been left with a somewhat besmirched reputation. Its medical value has become increasingly circumscribed, until now it occupies a comparatively minor role. . . . The indictment against alcohol as a danger to the body is severe.<sup>11</sup>

The small place that alcohol occupies as a therapeutic agent in medicine is reflected in the fact that the amount of wines and spirits used in American hospitals has decreased almost 80 per cent during the past thirty years.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Haven Emerson says, "Alco-

<sup>9</sup> *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>11</sup> Strecker and Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 107.



hol is not a specific or cure for any disease, unless one considers 'worry' to be a disease, and a drugged indifference a cure."<sup>13</sup> Thus, generally speaking, alcoholic beverages are used as therapeutic agents only to render comfort and peace of mind to the aged and to those with chronic diseases and sometimes, in small quantities, to increase the appetite.<sup>14</sup>

#### ALCOHOL AND DISEASES OF THE BODY

With respect to the relation of alcohol to diseases of the body it is difficult to speak with certainty because the conclusions of scientific researchers on the subject are often contradictory. According to Dr. Emil Bogen, "No other poison causes so many deaths, or leads to or intensifies so many diseases, both physical and mental, as does alcohol in the various forms in which it is taken."<sup>15</sup> The trend of the conclusions on the clinical and experimental findings seems to be somewhat as follows:

While there is little evidence that the moderate use of alcohol has any influence on a person's susceptibility to disease, the contrary is true in the case of the immoderate and excessive use. Experimental evidence indicates that the "heavy" drinker is less resistant to certain diseases, that his red blood cells (the carriers of oxygen) are more fragile, and that the formation of immune bodies, which protect against infections and bring about cures, are [*sic*] less readily formed.<sup>16</sup>

That alcoholic intoxication is a predisposing cause of pneumonia in alcoholic addicts has been observed by clinicians for many years.<sup>17</sup> Pneumonia ranks

<sup>13</sup> Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 56.

<sup>14</sup> Haven Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man* (New York, 1932), p. 176.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Mary Lewis Reed, *Alcohol—Its Physiological and Psychological Effects and Their Social Consequences* (2d ed.; New York, 1942), p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>17</sup> Editorial, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, CXII (1939), 240.

second in the causes of death among chronic alcoholics, while in the general population it stands in fifth place.<sup>18</sup>

There is a considerable amount of medical controversy over the relation of the use of alcohol to cirrhosis of the liver, but the general medical opinion seems to be that "long, habitual use of alcohol, either in small quantities with frequent excesses or in regularly large quantities, may profoundly impair gastric digestion and damage the liver."<sup>19</sup> The fact remains that cirrhosis of the liver occurs more frequently in the excessive drinker than in the moderate drinker and nondrinker.<sup>20</sup>

The incidence of tuberculosis is slightly higher among excessive users of alcoholic beverages than in abstainers and the continued use of alcohol is not favorable to recovery.<sup>21</sup> It is not likely that alcohol directly causes tuberculosis, but it may contribute to poor nutrition, which is a predisposing factor in the disease.<sup>22</sup> It is highly probable that other factors involved in the development of the disease are the irregularities in eating, sleeping, and exercise, and the chances of exposure, which are common incidents in the life of the habitual user of alcohol.

#### ALCOHOL AND HEREDITY

Caution must be exercised in taking a positive position with respect to the effects of alcohol on heredity. Since this is a controversial question among scientists, the present study will merely attempt to indicate briefly what recent investigations have revealed.

<sup>18</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>19</sup> Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

<sup>20</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>21</sup> Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>22</sup> Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 79.

Formerly it was believed that a craving for alcohol could be transmitted through the germ cells from parent to offspring and hence was a specific hereditary characteristic, but this belief is now obsolete in scientific thought.<sup>23</sup> This does not mean that heredity plays no part in the development of individual habits of alcoholic excess. McGuigan's *Pharmacology and Therapeutics* (1929) has the following to say about the hereditary effects of alcohol:

The offspring of habitual drunkards often present infirmities of the most varied nature. Statistics indicate that there is a larger proportion of deficient vitality, rachitis, chorea, tuberculosis, epilepsy, insanity, criminality, and alcoholism, among the children of alcoholics than among the descendants of total abstainers. It is difficult, however, to unravel the causal conditions. For instance, it is not known whether the alcohol itself acts upon the germ plasm or through the fetal blood to cause these defects, or whether they are due to hereditary degeneracies which caused alcoholism in the parent.<sup>24</sup>

Abraham Myerson maintains that "alcohol has a deleterious effect on germ cells of the male";<sup>25</sup> and to emphasize the theory of germ-plasm injury by toxic agents, and particularly by alcohol, he refers to the works of Forel, Hodge, Hoppe, Sommonds, Bertholet, Horsly, and Binzwanger. Myerson cites the work of August Forel, as representative of this group. Forel, he says, "lays down the law of blastophoria, which briefly is that the texture of the germinal cells may be injured and this injury is inheritable. Alcoholic blastophoria is a 'Hauptquelle' (prime source) of degeneracy."<sup>26</sup> Myerson concludes:

<sup>23</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>24</sup> Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>25</sup> *The Inheritance of Mental Diseases* (Baltimore, 1925), p. 300.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

What needs emphasis is this which so far as I know has not been hitherto considered: *that germplasms are not all alike in their resistance to toxins, any more than other tissues are.* In other words the germplasm of some persons may be injured by alcohol though the germplasm of the majority may easily pass through the ordeal without injury, as one man may get drunk on a glass of whisky while another drinks a quart without definite or noticeable injury. . . . *The wide variability of the human being is an outstanding factor in all discussions on human problems, and it does not seem improbable that this extends to the resistance of the germplasm.*<sup>27</sup>

Experiments by C. R. Stockard on guinea pigs, Raymond Pearl on fowl, and S. A. McDowell on rats with respect to the effects of alcohol on offspring, in general confirm one another. Stockard reports the following effects on the progeny of his treated guinea pigs:<sup>28</sup> (1) The animals that were subjected to alcohol showed a total mortality among their offspring almost twice as high as that shown among the offspring of the control group. (2) In the treated series the prenatal deaths were two and one-third times the number of postnatal deaths, while in the control series prenatal and postnatal deaths were equal. (3) The higher mortality rate of the offspring of the treated animals continued to the third generation. (4) The total increase in the mortality of the offspring of alcoholics was almost entirely due to an excessively high prenatal death rate. Stockard concludes:

Thus the combination of bad eggs with a bad environment moves the moment of death back to an earlier stage in existence. The weaker specimens under the more severe environmental conditions are largely eliminated before birth and those that do survive to be born are only the more nearly normal and vigorous individuals.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>28</sup> Stockard, *The Physical Basis of Personality* (New York, 1931), pp. 157-163.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*



Gillette and Reinhardt say:

The conclusion of Stockard and C. B. Davenport regarding the effects of alcohol on offspring agree in this: the effects take place on the embryo, but not on the germ cells. It is not a case of securing results by hereditary but by post-conception selective processes. The hardier strains are selected for survival, the weaker go to the wall and become eliminated.<sup>30</sup>

There seems to be no evidence that the occasional or very moderate use of alcohol by parents produces any injurious effects upon offspring. However, as Haven Emerson says:

It is legitimate to conclude from the very convincing experiments of Stockard and others with laboratory animals that any excess beyond the strictest moderation in the use of alcohol by parents may cause danger to the survival of offspring and their descendants for several generations.<sup>31</sup>

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

The primary effect of alcohol, irrespective of the amount that may be drunk, is upon the functions of the brain—<sup>32</sup> those functions which express and control the emotions, the will, attention, memory, intelligence, reason, and judgment, as well as those which control the muscular and sensory conduct of the individual. However, the degree and nature of the effects of alcohol are determined by the percentage taken up by the brain and spinal cord. The amount of alcohol in the nervous system of a living person cannot be measured directly at the present time.<sup>33</sup> The content in the blood, which may be determined rather

<sup>30</sup> John M. Gillette and James H. Reinhardt, *Problems of a Changing Social Order* (New York, 1942), p. 735.

<sup>31</sup> Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 52.

<sup>32</sup> Henry Smith Williams, *Drugs Against Men* (New York, 1935), p. 22.

<sup>33</sup> Walter R. Miles, "Psychological Effects of Alcohol in Man," in Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man*, chap. x, p. 226.



easily from blood samples, seems to approximate what is probably the concurrent alcoholic content in the nervous system.<sup>34</sup> Determinations may also be made from urine samples. Such measures are more significant scientifically than the amount of alcohol consumed. As Dr. Walter Miles says, "It is not the quantity of the beverage but the ethyl alcohol it contains; and not the alcohol that is in the stomach but that which is truly 'inside,' that is, in contact with the nervous system that produces the psychological effects."<sup>35</sup>

Concerning the psychological effects of alcohol Dr. George B. Wallace writes:

Moderate doses of alcohol lessen shyness, increase self-confidence, weaken the bonds of convention, set loose the emotions, and allow of greater freedom of speech and motion. It is for these actions that alcohol is so largely used as a beverage, allowing as it does an escape from the embarrassments, monotony or worries which many find so difficult to meet. The only explanation that can be given for these effects is that alcohol shuts off paths that carry inhibiting impulses, thus allowing freer play to the more elementary processes. But in addition to this, moderate doses of alcohol interfere with the process of logical continued reasoning, and with that of precision of movement.<sup>36</sup>

Many experiments have been conducted relative to the effects of alcohol on the mental processes. A number of the experiments have definite significance for social behavior, such as the following: the effects of alcohol on the learning and memory processes, the power of association, the power to detect and discriminate between sensory phenomena, the power to con-

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 226-227.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>36</sup> "The Pharmacological Actions of Alcohol," in Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man*, p. 41.

concentrate and sustain attention, and the ability to think and reason.<sup>37</sup> The experiments showed a retarding influence varying from a slight percentage to 50 per cent following dosages of alcohol ranging from light to heavy. One exception was reported: a heavy drinker's attention was improved 6 per cent by the administration of a small amount of alcohol.

The muscular movements cannot escape the influence of alcohol. In fact, it is the disturbance of these movements that gives some of the main external evidence of intoxication in a particular case. Numerous experiments have been conducted on individuals in which performance with alcohol was compared with performance without alcohol under otherwise similar conditions. Because of the bearing which the loss of efficiency in the motor activities may have on social behavior, i.e., the possibility of serious errors or accidents, the following tests (Table V) may be mentioned: eye-hand co-ordination, acts of marksmanship and typewriting, control of speech and eye movements, and motor activities involving muscular integration.<sup>38</sup> As may be seen from Table V, the percentages of increase in errors and reduction in efficiency ran from slight to 113 after dosages of alcohol ranging from light to heavy.

In referring to the various psychological experiments on the effects of alcohol on the performance of specific tasks, John J. Conger says:

The general picture is (1) that "alcohol has a depressing effect on all psychological functions yet measured"; (2) that, for the most part, more complex activities (such as reasoning

<sup>37</sup> Miles, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-253. Dr. Miles gives a review of the research findings regarding the effects of alcohol on the mental processes.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231-239.

and judgment) seem to be impaired more than simpler activities (such as tapping).<sup>38a</sup>

#### ALCOHOL AND CREATIVE ABILITY

It is a matter of common knowledge that many of the world's greatest poets, novelists, playwrights, and artists use alcoholic beverages. Some of them drink moderately; others drink excessively. Frequently the claim has been made that these men find in alcohol a stimulus to their creativity. Others have gone so far as to say that the secret of the inspiration and creativity of many literati is alcohol.

TABLE V  
PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS SHOWING INCREASE IN ERRORS OR  
DECREASE IN EFFICIENCY AS A RESULT OF  
DRINKING ETHYL ALCOHOL\*

TEST†	AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL‡	INCREASE IN ERRORS AND LOSS OF EFFICIENCY IN PER CENT
Dotting Machine (McDougall and Smith, 1920)	10 cc.	21
	15 cc.	42
	20 cc.	39
	25 cc.	113
Marksmanship (Army Medical Corps, France, 1917)	50 gm.	30-50
Typewriting (Vernon, 1919)	30 cc. (with food)	67
	30 cc. (without food)	105
Speech Reaction (Hollingsworth, 1923)	39.4 cc.	8
	78.8 cc.	13
Speed of Eye Movement (Dodge and Benedict, 1915)	30 cc.	2.5
		18.0

\* Source: Miles, *op. cit.*, pp. 231-239.

† The tests concerned the effects of alcohol within a few minutes to two hours after ingestion.

‡ The amount stated represents absolute alcohol; however, it was administered in some diluted form.

<sup>38a</sup> Conger, John J., "The Effects of Alcohol on Conflict Behavior in the Albino Rat," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, XII (March, 1951), 1.

With one or two exceptions, there has been very little in the way of actual scientific study of the role which alcohol plays in the lives of creative geniuses. Still, on the basis of what is known about the psychological effects of alcohol certain conclusions may be reached about its influence on the life of the creative worker. In moderate doses it may release his tension and increase his self-confidence. Used in anything beyond moderate amounts it would impair his intelligence, reason, and judgment.

Dr. Anne Roe made a study of the role which alcohol plays in the lives of twenty distinguished American artists. Each uses alcohol to some extent. Five are moderate drinkers; nine are steady social drinkers; and six are excessive drinkers. Dr. Roe concludes: "With one exception, they have all found that alcohol is not a good stimulus to creative work and they do not use it consciously for this purpose. If they have a heavy schedule of work they may deliberately avoid its use except to a very limited extent."<sup>39</sup>

Many stories have been widely circulated to the effect that Edgar Allan Poe did his best creative work under the influence of alcohol. Hervey Allen, author of an interesting and scholarly biography of Poe, after a thoroughgoing investigation of the sources of Poe's poetic inspiration finds not one of them "from the bottle."<sup>40</sup> Poe was a periodic drinker, not a regular drinker. For long periods he did not drink at all. It was during these periods that he produced his literary work. Professor Albion King says: "Let it never

<sup>39</sup> "Alcohol and Creative Work: Painters," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, VI (March, 1946), 465.

<sup>40</sup> *Israfel* (New York, 1934), pp. 137, 597.

be forgotten that the real source of Poe's genius was his prodigious labors and his exacting scholarship."<sup>41</sup>

#### ALCOHOL AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Alcoholic drinks have long been given an important place in various types of social gatherings—weddings, dances, parties, initiations, ceremonials, festivals, business meetings. Why is alcohol so widely used on these occasions? Many people answer that question by saying that the serving of drinks is simply a matter of custom. We must then ask, Why the custom? We can partly answer on the basis of what we have discovered about the psychological effects of alcohol. We know that alcohol, when used by most people in moderate amounts, helps remove, temporarily at least, fears, feelings of inferiority, weariness, boredom, and suspicion. In other words, it helps pave the way for common thoughts and feelings. It enables people to mingle more freely. In other words, alcohol tends to level and socialize the group. In the minds of many people the serving of alcoholic drinks thus becomes the practical approach to an enjoyable evening. This level of influence is the only one which many people see. It is, on the other hand, a role played by alcohol which many refuse to acknowledge.

#### ALCOHOL AND MENTAL DISEASES

It is generally recognized that mental diseases tend to follow prolonged and excessive use of alcohol. According to Strecker and Chambers, such mental diseases range from "the acute, vivid, and sometimes death dealing delirium tremens to alcoholic dementia, in which the patient is deprived forever of the last

<sup>41</sup> "Edgar Allan Poe: A Study in the Motives to Drink," *International Student*, XXXIX (Nov., 1941), 55.



vestige of those mental faculties by virtue of which man maintains his superiority over other species."<sup>42</sup>

The alcoholic drink habit leading to mental disease is ordinarily formed in early life, in the early twenties for men and a few years later for women.<sup>43</sup> The onset of the mental disease usually occurs, on an average, at about forty-five years of age. It is commonly preceded by impairment of physical health, reduction of efficiency in employment, and loss of position.<sup>44</sup>

The rate of incidence of alcoholic mental diseases appears to depend to a considerable degree on the extent of the general use of alcoholic beverages in the population. The rate varies widely among the various groupings of people. It is higher among men than among women; higher among urban residents than among rural residents; higher among foreign-born whites than among native whites; higher among certain ethnic groups than among others, being very rare among the Jews, and relatively less frequent among the English, Germans, and Italians than among the Irish and Slavonic peoples.<sup>45</sup>

Since alcoholic mental diseases occur in only a small proportion of the individuals who drink to great excess, alcohol is now not generally held to be the sole cause of such mental diseases. Their occurrence is thought to be influenced by such factors as an unbalanced nutritional state of the inebriate, infection and injury, peculiarities of personality, and inborn mental deficiencies.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, certain mental diseases, in that they occur considerably more frequently

<sup>42</sup> Strecker and Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> Pollock, *Mental Diseases*, p. 202.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>45</sup> Pollock, "The Prevalence of Mental Disease Due to Alcoholism," in Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man*, pp. 364, 371.

<sup>46</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

or solely among inebriates, may justifiably be ascribed to alcohol, even though they may not be due to the direct action of alcohol. Dr. Pollock puts it this way:

The primary cause of alcoholic mental disease is over-indulgence in alcoholic beverages for a period of years.

It is sometimes claimed that the person who develops alcoholic mental disease is an abnormal individual who acquires the drink habit because of his abnormality, or perhaps because of mental conflicts from which he seeks relief. There can be no doubt that certain cases of alcoholic mental disease can be accounted for in this manner, but comprehensive statistical studies in this State [New York] and elsewhere tend to indicate that the great majority of persons who develop alcoholic mental disease are average citizens who show no marked abnormality prior to the formation of the alcoholic habit.<sup>47</sup>

Just what percentage of all mental disease alcohol may account for is uncertain. Statistical reports on alcoholic mental disease are usually based on causes of admission to mental hospitals. The figures in such reports vary widely, perhaps largely due to the differences in the standards of diagnosis of alcoholic mental disease which are employed.

#### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the scientific evidence relating to the effects of the use of alcoholic beverages on the individual. The findings seem to indicate clearly that the use of beverage alcohol, beyond a very moderate degree, may result in certain physical and mental diseases, may cause danger to the survival of one's offspring, and may lower one's efficiency in general. The evidence also shows that alcohol is a narcotic and not a stimulant. Further-

<sup>47</sup> *Mental Diseases*, pp. 204-205.

more, it must be concluded that alcohol has no merits as a food when employed for general uses. It is now more generally recognized that alcohol is not a stimulus to creative work in any field of endeavor. Alcohol when used in very moderate amounts may aid an individual in overcoming self-consciousness, fears, feelings of inferiority, etc., that hinder him in mingling more freely with his fellows. However, this does not mean that alcohol is the most effective or safest method of overcoming such mental states.

Although a person's behavior and its resulting effects are of great concern to himself, their chief significance lies in the bearing which they have upon the efficient functioning of the community as a whole. Hence the social effects of the use of alcoholic beverages are the phases of the question that are of main concern to society. It is with those aspects of the alcohol problem that the next chapter will deal.

## CHAPTER V

# THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON SOCIETY

MAN EXISTS only as a member of society, and his activities are closely woven into the life of the community of which he is a part. Practically all of his behavior is in some way related to the social order of the group to which he belongs. The effects of the things which an individual does are of great importance to that individual, but their principal significance rests on the bearing which they have on the life and welfare of the community as a whole. This fact applies to the use of alcoholic beverages just as to any other type of behavior.

Because of its effects on the life and behavior of the members of society, alcohol has long been considered in most civilized countries as one of the principal agents working for social disorganization and against social welfare. To what extent is that claim justified? As a partial answer to that question, the following pages will reveal some of the social consequences which result from the use of alcoholic beverages.

### ALCOHOL AND MORTALITY

The large life insurance companies supply what is generally accepted as being the most reliable information relative to the length of life as it is affected by the use of alcoholic beverages. The data revealed by experience with millions of lives insured by companies in

England, Scotland, Canada, and the United States lead to the conclusion that persons who have always been total abstainers are on the whole longer lived than non-abstainers. The evidence also indicates that occasional drinkers, who use only moderate amounts of alcohol, live about as long as total abstainers.

The life insurance companies in order to determine the relative mortality of a group of policyholders calculate the "expected" number of deaths by a standard table of mortality, and then they compare the expected number of deaths with the actual number of deaths occurring in that type of group. For example, among a group of 10,000 men, all total abstainers, the expected deaths might be 100 per cent for a twenty-year period, but the actual deaths might be 80 per cent. The 80 per cent would be the relative mortality for that particular group. In like manner the relative mortality of any particular group of drinkers may be computed.

Table VI, showing the experience of the Northwestern Life Insurance Company, indicates quite clearly the difference in the length of life of various types of drinkers and nondrinkers. The results of the combined experiences of the life insurance companies of America as revealed in a volume entitled *Medical Impairment Study* (1929) are even more significant and conclusive.<sup>1</sup> Table VII shows impressive data which were compiled from that study.

Methods have not been devised by which the complete story of the effect of alcohol on mortality may be obtained. Even so, there is sufficient evidence to warrant the following conclusions: (1) The total number of deaths resulting each year from the use of alcohol

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 168.



TABLE VI

EFFECT OF ALCOHOL ON LENGTH OF LIFE AS REVEALED BY THE  
EXPERIENCE OF THE NORTHWESTERN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY:  
1924

(Under policies dating from 1885 to 1909)\*

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLICYHOLDERS	RELATIVE MORTALITY IN PER CENT	COMPARATIVE MORTALITY
Total Abstainers	70	100
Moderate Users	78	111
Regular Beer Drinkers	91	130
Regular Spirits Drinkers	127	181

\* Taken from Arthur Hunter, "Longevity and Mortality as Affected by the Use of Alcohol," in Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man*, p. 330.

TABLE VII

COMPARATIVE DEATH RATES OF NONDRINKERS, MODERATE  
DRINKERS, AND EXCESSIVE DRINKERS OF ALCOHOL\*

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLICYHOLDER	RELATIVE MORTALITY IN PER CENT	COMPARISON
Abstainers (never use alcohol in any form). Standard Insurance Rate.	100	Standards; expected number of deaths.
Moderate Drinkers (use alcohol in small quantities occasionally; infrequently, once or twice per year, a little tipsy; rarely use at all). Standard Insurance Rate	109	Close to standard; 9 per cent more deaths than expected.
Excessive Drinkers (use alcohol in excess occasionally; become drunk a few times a year when celebrating a birth or election). Substandard Insurance Rate, having to pay higher premiums for the added risk.	195	Far worse than standard; about twice the expected number of deaths.

\* Taken from Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

runs into the thousands. (2) Occasional drinkers, who use alcohol moderately, probably live about as long as abstainers. (3) Excessive drinkers have a significantly

higher death rate than abstainers and occasional drinkers.<sup>1\*</sup>

Sometimes persons seeking to establish a case that alcohol does not shorten the length of life relate the story of someone who indulged in alcohol without discretion virtually all his life and yet lived to the age of eighty or beyond. Such exceptions are of no surprise to the individuals who are informed on the subject of alcohol, nor does such a case contradict the evidence showing that the *average* person of such habits would have lived longer had he left alcohol alone.

#### POVERTY AND DEPENDENCY

The idea that alcoholic beverages, when used on a widespread scale by the population of a country, play a dominant role in producing poverty is traditional and generally accepted. Statistical demonstration is not necessary to establish the validity of that belief. It is true that alcohol may be overemphasized when it is labeled the principal factor in producing poverty. The fact is, since many other factors may also be involved, that it is difficult to determine the exact force which alcoholic beverages exert in the situation. But there is sufficient evidence for the conclusion that poverty has as one of its main causal factors the use of alcohol.

In the modern world where so much skill, speed, endurance, and physical and mental fitness are required, the man or woman who develops the drink habit greatly endangers his or her chance of securing and holding a worth-while position. The use of alcoholic beverages beyond a very moderate degree is likely to cause an impairment of mental and physical

<sup>1\*</sup> Leopold Erwin Wexberg, "Alcoholism As a Sickness," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, XII (June, 1951), 219.

efficiency. The immoderate use of alcohol by heads of families usually results in laxness and inattention to the duties of the home. It often spells neglect where there are children. In many cases, especially among laborers, the money that is spent for alcohol means that the family will be deprived of some of the necessities of life. Even in view of the fact that the laborer has improved his economic condition during the past several years, the following statement by Robert W. Kelso needs no significant modification:

Bearing in mind the fact that the laborer throughout the length and breadth of the United States makes no better than a bare living out of his labor, it must be apparent that a habit so far-reaching in its effect as to impair him physically and mentally, and so depressing as to dull the edge of his will to struggle for a better living, will certainly be a potent factor in catching and holding him in poverty permanently. Of the personal causes of poverty it is undoubtedly the greatest.<sup>2</sup>

It must be recognized that as the workingman constitutes the great majority in the population, so does he, in all probability, constitute the great majority of the intemperate users of alcohol.

It is estimated that the people of the United States spent five billion dollars for alcoholic beverages in 1937.<sup>3</sup> For the same year the retail sales for all commodities were approximately forty billion dollars.<sup>4</sup> This means that one dollar out of eight for all retail expenditures went for alcoholic beverages. When it is realized that about 43.5 per cent of the population above sixteen years of age constitute the great majority of users of alcohol, then it becomes apparent

<sup>2</sup> *Poverty* (New York, 1929), p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> Strecker and Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. xii.

<sup>4</sup> The National Forum, *Alcohol Problems Visualized* (Chicago, 1938), chart 8.

that this group spent considerably more than one out of eight dollars for alcohol in all retail purchases.

### ALCOHOL AND IMMORALITY

The sexual impulse is a natural drive among human beings, just as it is among the lower animals. However, for medical, social, and moral reasons, civilized peoples have found it necessary to adopt certain codes and conventions to regulate the expression of the sexual desire. Such codes and conventions are a part of the cultural system of human societies, and are usually learned by individuals during their period of development and training. But in order that its members may be able to abide by its codes and conventions, each society strives to develop in them certain faculties, among which are a moral sense, will power, and inhibitory controls. The ability to employ those faculties depends upon the proper functioning of the higher brain center.

As has been pointed out, the chief function of alcohol is its depressant effect on the higher brain center and on the central nervous system. If used to any degree beyond very moderate amounts, alcohol may deprive the individual of his moral sense, will power, and inhibitory controls. Hence prostitution and other forms of sexual immorality have long been associated with the use of liquor among civilized peoples. The belief that there is often a direct relationship between them appears to be correct. Dr. John W. Churchman, an eminent specialist in venereal diseases, expresses the usual conclusion of observant physicians: "Alcohol paralyzes the inhibitions, renders the physical urge more obvious, disarms the critical faculty, breaks down reasonableness and prudence, blurs fineness of per-

ception and taste, without necessarily creating the state socially recognized as intoxication."<sup>5</sup> Also, Dr. Haven Emerson, whose study and wide experience in public health should enable him to know the facts in this matter, says:

The most successful artificial or drug excitant to sexual excess is alcohol. More instances of syphilis and gonorrhea in youths of both sexes, whose sober good intentions are to avoid extramarital sexual connection, have been due to alcoholic abuse than to any other one cause.

Alcohol in moderate amounts suffices commonly to lower self-restraint and self-control in situations of sexual temptations so that exposure to hazards of sexual diseases is undertaken thoughtlessly and without care of the consequences.<sup>6</sup>

When alcohol is sufficiently present in the nervous system, the "censor" (Freud's term), whose function it is to "restrain or divert inappropriate sexual impulses," is off guard.<sup>7</sup> Under such conditions stimuli that would usually receive but little attention or be easily put aside are freely permitted to arouse the emotions to the point of overt expression.

The close association between the brothel and the bar has been widely observed. Before the Prohibition era, saloons were commonly recognized as actively allied with prostitution. Many saloons provided rooms in their buildings where prostitutes might operate and also sell drinks on commission. The saloon keepers usually furnished aid by providing lawyers, putting up bail, and paying fines when their prostitutes became involved in legal difficulties.

<sup>5</sup> Haven Emerson, *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 82, quoted from John W. Churchman, "Prevention of Venereal Diseases" in *Preventive Medicine and Public Health* (Vol. VII of Nelson Loose-Leaf Living Medicine), p. 260.

<sup>6</sup> *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man*, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> Emerson (ed.), *Alcohol and Man*, pp. 263-264.



## ALCOHOL AND ACCIDENTS

The fact that accidents are multiplied by the use of alcoholic beverages is a matter of common observation. Anything that exerts a depressant influence on the higher rational and critical faculties, which determine the quality of perceptions, judgments, and performances, inevitably leads to errors and inefficiency in individual and social behavior. Since the use of alcohol lowers mental and motor efficiency, it is natural to expect that its use would be a causal factor in various types of accidents. It is now recognized that even after the use of very small amounts of alcohol, the driver of an automobile may be unable to take the proper precautions soon enough to avoid an accident. McCarthy and Douglass say: "Traffic accidents and fatalities, both pedestrian and driver, result as often from a few drinks as from a dozen."<sup>8</sup> Dr. Samuel R. Gerber maintains that the drinking of one glass of beer may lead to an automobile accident.<sup>9</sup> However, it is difficult to determine with any degree of exactness what influence small amounts of alcohol will have upon the behavior of a particular individual or on the same individual under different conditions. Table VIII gives a rough approximation of the effects which various amounts of alcohol will have upon the average person, for a period of from thirty minutes to five hours after ingestion. Dr. Walter Miles says:

Alcohol taken without food in amounts not exceeding 30 cc. or 24 gm. (about 2 ounces of whiskey or 2 bottles of beer) produces a sufficient depressive action in most people to interfere somewhat with various mental functions; vision is impaired; the field of attention narrowed; mental associations are slowed; and even if sleepiness is not produced the attentive

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>9</sup> *Alcohol and Traffic* (Columbus, Ohio, 1939), p. 63.

TABLE VIII

ACUTE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON THE AVERAGE MAN:  
ONE-HALF TO FIVE HOURS AFTER INGESTION\*

PER CENT OF ALCOHOL IN THE BLOOD	APPROXIMATE QUANTITY DRUNK	EFFECTS, NERVOUS AND MUSCULAR
0.01	½ oz. of alcohol (diluted), or 1 oz. of whisky, gin, etc., or 1 bottle of beer	Initial feeling of stimulation phase begins, behavior about normal.
0.02	1 oz. of alcohol (diluted), or 2 oz. of whisky, gin, etc., or 2 bottles of beer	Effects begin to be shown; decreased accuracy, attention, co-ordination, plus accidents.
0.15	4 oz. of alcohol (diluted), or ½ pint of whisky, gin, etc., or 7 bottles of beer	Legally under the influence: loud talking, argumentative, dangerous to himself and others.
0.40	8 oz. of alcohol (diluted), or 1 pint of whisky, gin, etc., or 12 bottles of beer	Unconscious; paralyzed; help- less.

\* Source: Waddell and Haag, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-114. As was pointed out in the test, it must be borne in mind that the above table is only a rough approximation. Especially after the consumption of small amounts of alcohol, there is great variation in the behavior of individuals and of the same individual under varying sets of conditions.

consciousness tends to be so occupied with subjective feelings and thoughts that the individual is not easily aroused by the noises, lights or movements in his environment. In general, quite aside from the difficulties with voluntary muscular control, the slightly alcoholized person, driving on the highway resembles in his behavior tendencies the absent-minded, much introverted individual found by test to be accident-prone.<sup>10</sup>

For the purpose of determining the extent and the effect of drinking among automobile drivers, a study was conducted by the Northwestern University Traffic Institute.<sup>11</sup> In the study, 1,750 persons, drivers chosen at random along highways, were tested by the "drunko-

<sup>10</sup> Miles, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>11</sup> R. L. Holcomb, "Alcohol in Relation to Traffic," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, III (1938), 1076-1084.

meter" (breath method), a device recently developed by Dr. R. N. Harger of the Indiana University School of Medicine. The findings revealed that about 12 per cent of the drivers tested had been drinking. The results of this test were compared with the results of alcohol tests made on the urine of drivers who, during the two preceding years, had been taken to hospitals after being involved in accidents. Whereas only 12 per cent of the drivers in the normal driving population showed they had been drinking, about 47 per cent of the drivers involved in accidents had been drinking.

Dr. Gerber reports a study, in which he participated, of deaths due to traffic accidents in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.<sup>12</sup> In that county there were 312 deaths due to traffic accidents in the year 1936, and 88 in the first three months of the year 1937. Out of the total 400 deaths, about 82 per cent were males and 18 per cent females. From that number 110 cases, selected at random, were tested for the presence of alcohol. The investigation revealed that about 55 per cent of the males and 2 per cent of the females were under the influence of alcohol at the time the accidents occurred. Dr. Gerber makes the following important statement:

We believe that individuals with blood concentrations less than 0.15% may also be considered as under the influence of liquor or intoxicated. This is important from this standpoint. An individual who has had only a little to drink feels somewhat "stimulated" and is confident of his ability to drive his car or walk across a street safely. Because of this blunting of the sensorium, usual caution may be lost. The driver or pedestrian may be a bit reckless and at a given crucial moment will be incapable of instant decision and critical judgment, and therefore, an accident may ensue.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

A well-controlled test of the influence of drinking on automobile driving was conducted in Sweden (1948) by Goldberg and his associates. Goldberg reports the following results:

The consumption of 3 to 4 bottles (1 to 1.3 liters) of beer containing 3.2 per cent alcohol by weight (37 to 49 g. alcohol) and evoking an alcohol concentration in the blood of 40 to 60 mg. per 100 cm. of blood (0.04 to 0.06 per cent), or strong liquor containing the same amount of alcohol, impaired performance by 25 to 30 per cent on the average, and up to 70 per cent on one of the tests, compared to the control group. Impairment of performance began at an alcohol concentration in the blood of 0.03 to 0.04 per cent.<sup>13a</sup>

In 1937 there were 4,785 motorists in the State of Pennsylvania who had their driver's licenses suspended, and of that number 3,168 were charged with intoxication.<sup>14</sup> In the nation as a whole 25 to 40 per cent of the cases in which driver's licenses are suspended are on the grounds of intoxication.<sup>15</sup>

It is very difficult to determine just what percentage of accidents in industry has as a causal factor the use of alcoholic beverages on the part of the workers. Feldman states: "That liquor has been an important cause of accidents, and that the elimination of liquor would materially reduce accidents, has for decades been one of the dogmas of industry."<sup>16</sup> That the use of alcohol leads to industrial accidents is beyond question, and yet this fact cannot very well be demonstrated statistically because of the difficulty of isolating drinking from other causal factors.

<sup>13a</sup> Leonard Goldberg, "Alcohol Research in Sweden, 1939-1948," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, X (Sept., 1949), 285.

<sup>14</sup> National Forum, *op. cit.*, chart 4d.

<sup>15</sup> Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

<sup>16</sup> Herman Feldman, *Prohibition, Its Economic and Industrial Aspects* (New York, 1930), p. 213.



Perhaps the strongest evidence of the relation of the use of liquor to industrial accidents is to be found in the testimony and practice of industrial officials. After obtaining the opinions of hundreds of industrial superintendents and executives, Feldman states that the vast majority of employers were in favor of prohibiting the use of liquor in so far as they had observed its effects on industry.<sup>17</sup> The Du Ponts became strong leaders and financial supporters of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, and yet, it is interesting to note, they have prohibited for many years the use of intoxicants by their employees.<sup>18</sup> Professor Irving Fisher of Yale University wrote to Pierre du Pont in 1928 inquiring as to his attitude toward the use of alcoholic beverages by industrial workers. Mr. Du Pont replied as follows:

If certain work involving danger to life and property requires absolute sobriety, I cannot find fault with the employer refusing to employ a man who shows any signs of contact with alcohol, when he reports for work, and, in fact, where the employer may be held liable for the action of the man employed, he may, if he chooses, properly decline to employ a man who uses intoxicants at any time. This is no different from refusing to employ a man whose sight or hearing is in any way defective for jobs requiring great keenness in those senses. It is purely a matter of choice of the man most suitable for the job.<sup>19</sup>

### ALCOHOL AND CRIME

For centuries the use of alcoholic beverages has been regarded as one of the influential factors involved in crime. Undoubtedly there is sufficient factual basis for holding that there is a definite relationship between

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>18</sup> Fletcher Dobyns, *The Amazing Story of Repeal* (Chicago, 1940), pp. 8 ff.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.



crime and alcohol, especially with respect to certain types of crime. From what is known of the psychological effects of alcohol upon the individual, it is logical to infer that the drinker, particularly the one who indulges beyond moderate amounts, may become less considerate of others, less discreet, and exhibit various antisocial traits. On the other hand, it must be recognized that the prevalence of immoderate drinking among criminals does not always indicate causation. Adverse social conditions may be influential factors in producing both criminal behavior and excessive use of alcohol. Even so, both the direct and the indirect causal relationship between crime and alcohol are impressive.

Some authorities have estimated that 95 per cent of the crimes committed in this country are the result of the use of alcoholic beverages.<sup>20</sup> Scientific investigations, although showing that liquor is an important causal factor in the production of crime, reveal that 95 per cent is too high a figure. The Committee of Fifty spent several years in research on almost every phase of the alcohol problem.<sup>21</sup> Its investigations on alcohol as a factor in crime covered 13,402 convicts in

<sup>20</sup> Judge Joseph T. Zottoli, associate justice of the Municipal Court of Boston, speaking at Quincy, Massachusetts, March 13, 1942, gave some conclusions from a survey which he had recently made of crime conditions and criminal trends. Judge Zottoli said: "Take all the jails and houses of correction of the state, bunch them together, and you will find that 95 per cent of the prisoners in them are there because of alcoholism and crimes connected with it.

"In the State's prison and the reformatory for men and the reformatory for women, you will find practically 50 per cent of the prisoners are there because of crimes related to alcohol.

"At least 95 per cent of those at the state farm are there because of liquor and crimes connected with liquor" (reported in *International Student*, XXXIX, May, 1942, 188).

<sup>21</sup> Committee of Fifty, *The Liquor Problem: A Summary of Investigations* (Boston, 1905), pp. 123 ff.

seventeen prisons and reformatories located in twelve states; it did not include ordinary jails, and thus did not consider in its statistics persons convicted for drunkenness, violation of liquor laws, and other misdemeanors involving liquor. In its report the committee stated that the use of alcoholic beverages is a factor in about 50 per cent of the crimes committed, being a sole cause in 16 per cent of crimes and a first cause in 31 per cent. It appeared as a causal factor in 51.5 per cent of the crimes against persons and in 49.5 per cent of the crimes against property. This study of the Committee of Fifty remains as the most reliable evidence obtainable on the relationship of the use of alcoholic beverages to crime in the preprohibition days, and its findings still indicate that alcohol is a major factor in the causation of crime. Modern case studies show that a large number of criminals have been immoderate drinkers. The Gluecks in their investigations found that 39.4 per cent of their male criminals used liquor to excess,<sup>22</sup> and 25.4 per cent of the women delinquent at the age of adolescence were given to drunkenness.<sup>23</sup>

To determine the number of cases of felony in which liquor played a part, a study was made by Wilbur La Roe, Jr., a member of the District of Columbia Board of Parole.<sup>24</sup> Mr. La Roe selected at random 625 felony cases which came before the Board of Parole, and from the records examined he found the following crimes committed by "persons under the in-

<sup>22</sup> Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Five Hundred Criminal Careers* (New York, 1930), p. 127.

<sup>23</sup> Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women* (New York, 1934), p. 86.

<sup>24</sup> "A Source of Crime at the National Capital," *International Student*, XXXIX (1941), 57-59; condensed from a letter by Mr. La Roe to the *Washington Star*, August 11, 1941.

fluence of liquor: 25 robberies, 3 arsons, 26 house-breakings, 14 manslaughters, 29 assaults, 7 murders and 42 other felonies—a total of 146 out of 625 cases studied.” With reference to the felony cases which came before the District of Columbia Board of Parole, Mr. La Roe comments: “The more I study them the more I am convinced that liquor is a prolific cause of crime.”

A leading criminologist, Edwin H. Sutherland, says: “Intoxication is involved in many cases of homicide. The estimate has been made that 40 per cent of the murdered victims are intoxicated at the time they are murdered.”<sup>25</sup>

The indirect effects of alcohol on crime are great. The home in which there is excessive drinking frequently exerts a very unwholesome influence on the child. William Healy reports that of a thousand cases of juvenile delinquency included in one of his studies, 31 per cent came from homes in which one or both parents drank to excess; in another investigation the percentage was 26.5, and in his Boston study 51.<sup>26</sup>

It must be concluded that the use of alcoholic beverages constitutes one of the dominant factors involved in the production of crime. But the fact must likewise be recognized that alcohol cannot be regarded as the sole cause in any high percentage of crimes, because crime is more accurately explained when the total situation, in which many factors usually operate, is considered.

<sup>25</sup> *Principles of Criminology*, p. 25. Sutherland cited the 40 per cent estimate from Theron W. Kilmer, “Alcoholism, Its Relation to Police Work and Jurisprudence,” *Correction* (New York Department of Correction), III (Aug., 1933), No. 8, 11-12.

<sup>26</sup> Edwin H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology*, p. 114, cited from Judge Baker Foundation, *Case Studies*, Ser. 1, Nos. 2-3, p. 5a.

## INEBRIETY AND CHRONIC ALCOHOLISM

It is now being recognized that one of the greatest factors working against social welfare is that of the habitual intemperate use of alcoholic beverages. Dr. Thomas J. Meyers, president of the American College of Neuropsychiatrists, says: "Alcoholism has become the greatest public health problem next to syphilis, and the greatest economic problem next to unemployment."<sup>27</sup>

It appears that the problem of drunkenness, alcohol addiction, and chronic alcoholism reaches its greatest magnitude in the societies where the stronger alcoholic beverages are generally used. This does not mean that serious consequences do not result from indulgence in the milder alcoholic drinks where they are widely used. But as Yandell Henderson points out, "The stronger a nation's drinks the more abundant its annual crop of alcoholics."<sup>28</sup> The United States has long been regarded as a country whose people have a preference for drinks of high alcoholic content. The proportions which the problem of habitual intemperance takes in this country are enormous.

It is impossible to estimate the number of persons who are given to habitual drunkenness in the United States. The arrests for drunkenness may give some slight indication. The Federal Bureau of Investigation reported that in the year 1939 in 1,214 cities aggregating 39,147,097 inhabitants 592,510 persons were charged with drunkenness.<sup>29</sup> When used as a basis for generalizing concerning the entire coun-

<sup>27</sup> Cited in *International Student*, XXXIX (April, 1942), 158.

<sup>28</sup> "The High Proof of Liquor as a Factor in the Production of Alcoholism," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, I (June, 1940), 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Uniform Crime Reports* (Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office), XI (1940), No. 1, 25.



try, those figures are subject to a number of doubts. It is not known how many repeaters were among those arrested. It is likely that there were many who were arrested two or more times during that year. On the other hand, the figures, if taken to represent actual drunkenness in the population, must be viewed as a gross underestimate. The police do not arrest all persons who become publicly drunk. It is common knowledge that in law enforcement at this point there is wide differentiation between the rich and the poor. In many cities the majority so arrested are charged with disorderly conduct rather than with drunkenness. Furthermore, the number of persons arrested for drunkenness, in different years or in different localities, may vary because of changes or differences in method and degree of law enforcement. Even so, when statistics for drunkenness are correlated with other known facts—such as arrests on charges in which liquor was a factor, the estimate of liquor consumption, commitment of chronic alcoholics to mental hospitals—the trend of intemperate use of alcoholic beverages may be revealed to some extent. It is generally conceded that the consumption of liquor greatly declined during the first years of national prohibition. The arrests for drunkenness as compared with arrests for other offenses showed a very great reduction, as illustrated in Table IX, which fact perhaps indicates that there was a general decline in alcoholic intemperance during that period.

Intemperate drinking, addiction to alcohol, and chronic alcoholism appear to be greatly on the increase in the United States. It is common knowledge that drinking during recent years has become more popular and widespread among practically all classes.



That being the case, it is natural to expect many "problem drinkers." Dr. Norman Jolliffe, of Bellevue Hospital and New York University, in a report to the Research Council on Problems of Alcohol, estimated that there are 56,000 new chronic alcoholics in the United States each year, the total number in the country being about 900,000.<sup>30</sup> In the course of a symposium on alcohol, sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Horatio Pollock estimated the country's number of chronic alcoholics at a minimum of 1,000,000;<sup>31</sup> Haggard and Jellinek, in 1942, estimated the number to be about 600,000.<sup>32</sup> With respect to the enormous problem which chronic alcoholism presents to society, Strecker and Chambers say:

If, at best, the quantitative conception can only hope to be suggestive, then the estimate of qualitative loss due to alcohol is even more inaccurate. Again, it errs in the direction of underestimate. There is involved, in many instances, a considerable detraction from the general social efficiency and progress, since, usually, the alcoholic is inadequately working (if he can work at all), at a level far below his capacities.<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately society has as yet discovered no satisfactory method of treating alcohol addicts and chronic alcoholics. This fact is all too obvious when it is realized what happens in general to people so diseased. Many of them land in jail, some in mental hospitals; others go from one sanatorium or from one so-called "cure" to another; some are treated by private physicians, and a large number are simply permitted to rove

<sup>30</sup> "The United States Has 46,000 New Cases of Alcoholism Annually," *Science News Letter*, XXXVIII (Nov. 9, 1940), 297.

<sup>31</sup> Squires, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. xii.

TABLE IX

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS AND OTHER OFFENSES IN  
MASSACHUSETTS BY YEARS, 1917-1922\*

YEAR	DRUNKENNESS	OTHER OFFENSES
1917	129,455	75,661
1918	92,838	80,452
1919	79,212	81,180
1920	37,160	78,466
1921	59,585	92,481
1922	75,655	91,934

\* Taken from Sutherland, *Criminology* (Philadelphia, 1924), p. 175.

about cities and towns. Dr. Thomas J. Meyers, president of the American College of Neuropsychiatrists, points out that in 1939 in the city of Los Angeles 40,000 chronic alcoholics went through the municipal courts, and that in that city there are 1,800 "permanent" alcoholics in the jails alone.<sup>34</sup>

One of the greatest problems of alcohol is that no one seems to know, with any degree of certainty, who can drink moderately and avoid intemperate drinking, alcohol addiction, and chronic alcoholism. Dr. William J. Mayo says:

In dealing with addiction to liquor the difficulty is that we cannot tell in advance who may become victims. We have no particular test, except the test of time, which ruins the man, nor have we any remedy to prevent his becoming an addict; consequently *three drinkers in ten* take a chance.<sup>35</sup>

Dr. Robert S. Carroll in pointing out the dangers inherent in the widespread use of alcoholic beverages says: "It is startling to think that in our land one out of three whom we meet is incapable of continuing any

<sup>34</sup> Squires, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> Statement to the staff of Mayo Hospital; quoted in Harry S. Warner, *Social Consequences of the Alcoholic Desire* (Washington, 1939), p. 6. Italics supplied by the present author.

form of alcoholic usage without courting a very present danger of being damaged or wrecked by its potency."<sup>36</sup>

There is now some statistical basis for estimating the number of inebriates (chronic alcoholics, alcohol addicts, and habitual excessive drinkers) in 1940 at a minimum of one out of ten users of alcohol. Jellinek says: "It may be stated, however, that 5 times the number of chronic alcoholics yields a minimum estimate of all inebriates."<sup>37</sup> An average of the estimates of chronic alcoholics by Jolliffe, Pollock, and Haggard and Jellinek would be over 880,000. Thus, if the number of chronic alcoholics were even 800,000 in 1940, the number of inebriates would be five times that number or 4,000,000. Since the number of users of alcoholic beverages for the same year was estimated at 40,000,000, then the number of inebriates would be one out of ten users.<sup>38</sup>

Thus the evidence indicates the chances that a user of alcoholic beverages will become an excessive or problem drinker are considerable. On the other hand, there are now no specific precautions that can insure a drinker that he will not become an inebriate. However, as McCarthy and Douglass say, "There is a

<sup>36</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19. Many other citations could be made from the works of men who have done research on this phase of the alcohol problem, showing that widespread use of alcohol may lead to widespread alcohol addiction. Dr. Charles H. Durfee says: "It should be clearly pointed out that anyone can become a problem-drinker, and that safety lies only in moderation; and further, that not everyone can drink even moderately, with impunity" (*To Drink or Not to Drink*, New York, 1937, p. 199). Dr. Robert Fleming says: "Anybody, if he drinks enough over a long period of time will become addicted: it takes some people longer than others to attain addiction but no human being can be regarded as immune" ("Psychiatric Aspects of Alcoholism," *Social Forces*, XXI, Oct., 1942), p. 75).

<sup>37</sup> *Recent Trends in Alcoholism*, p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> The year 1940 was chosen because it was about that date that the statistical estimates on the subject were more numerous and perhaps more reliable.

positive means of averting this risk, and that is the policy of abstinence."<sup>39</sup>

### CONCLUSION

This chapter has revealed some of the social consequences which follow the use of alcoholic beverages. The evidence indicates clearly that the use of alcohol, beyond a very moderate degree, frequently results in loss of efficiency and damage to social welfare. It is to be concluded that the use of alcohol as a beverage constitutes a definite social problem in this country. Hence, society may, in keeping with its prerogatives, exercise its power in an attempt to modify, replace, or eliminate the use of alcohol as a beverage in its cultural system. In other words, it may endeavor to establish some sort of control with respect to the use of alcoholic beverages. The next chapter will treat that phase of the question.

<sup>39</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 111.

## CHAPTER VI

# TOWARD SOCIAL CONTROL

ONE CHARACTERISTIC of any stable human society is that its members generally follow certain common modes of life. A rather high degree of uniformity in attitudes and behavior on the part of its members is necessary for a society to meet its needs, reach its goals, safeguard itself against internal conflicts, and protect itself from external forces. Thus the culture of a society provides rules of behavior and sanctions the use of particular implements in order that unity, co-operation, and efficiency within the group may be established and maintained. Every society seeks to develop in its members a *we*-feeling, or the ability and desire to act together for the common good. Through its various agencies of training and social control the human group attempts to instil in its individual members the fundamental ideas, ideals, values, and standards of its culture. The purpose is to develop in the individual that degree of self-control which enables him, both consciously and unconsciously, to shape his character and to conduct himself so as to promote the welfare of the group as a whole. All cultures include a series of techniques for dealing with individuals whose variations from the social pattern are great enough to interfere with the welfare or integration of the group. These techniques range all the way from



collective ridicule, non-co-operation, or ostracism to highly involved legal procedures. The important point is that the average individual in a society is so conditioned to the patterns of his culture that he conforms to them without any external compulsion. In other words, the habits and customs of the great majority of individuals are definitely related to the culture in which they live and usually change as the culture changes. Hence the social order of any society is largely a product of its culture.

The various parts of a cultural system, behavior patterns and artifacts, maintain a functional connection with each other. A certain degree of internal harmony between those parts is of paramount importance. Lack of integration in the cultural system causes confusion and conflict among individuals and a loss of efficiency for society. Therefore all societies usually exercise the right to modify, replace, or eliminate any traits or elements in their culture which they feel are resulting in social maladjustment.

This study maintains that the use of alcoholic beverages is mainly a cultural phenomenon. It is to be considered as being a trait or element in culture just as the use of the automobile, typewriter, or piano is to be regarded as a cultural trait or element. Alcoholic drinks have their place in a cultural system because it is felt that they have a particular function, or functions, to perform. The social definition of those functions may vary from period to period, from class to class, from group to group, and from society to society. Where alcoholic beverages are given a prominent place in a culture, the members of the society, who by social sanction are permitted to use them, become conditioned to their use voluntarily, or else attempts are

made by means of social pressure to coerce them into drinking.

The discussion in the preceding chapters has dealt with some of the historical aspects of the alcohol problem: how the use of alcoholic drinks has become embedded in culture, and the forms and extent to which various peoples of the world have used them. The individual and social effects of the consumption of intoxicating beverages have also been listed. The evidence indicates clearly that the use of alcoholic beverages, certainly in highly civilized societies, constitutes a social problem of major importance. In fact, practically all societies, particularly modern societies, that use or have used alcoholic drinks have recognized, sooner or later, that their widespread use by the population produces a definite social problem. The numerous voluntary and legal methods that have been employed to control liquor consumption by various nations and peoples are evidence of that fact.

#### SOME NATIONAL SYSTEMS OF LIQUOR CONTROL

Efforts to prohibit or control and limit the use of alcoholic beverages have taken a number of forms. Four general types of legislative methods that have been employed by civilized nations during recent years may be mentioned.

1. *Absolute prohibition as a national system.* This method was attempted in Finland, Norway, the United States, and a number of other countries, and then abandoned after a few years' trial. The experience of the United States with prohibition will be discussed briefly in subsequent pages.

2. *License and regulation.* England furnishes one of the best examples of the licensing system in that it

shows how such a method operates in a country whose people have been accustomed to drinking the heavier beers and distilled liquors. An increase in temperance in England was evidenced for the years 1913 to 1933. The consumption of distilled spirits decreased 60 per cent, beer consumption decreased 41 per cent, and arrests for drunkenness dropped 74 per cent during the same period.<sup>1</sup> It is not likely that the reduction in the consumption of alcoholic beverages during those years was due entirely to the English method of control. Other influential factors undoubtedly operating in the situation were the following: the economic depression, restrictions in connection with the dole, an adult education movement, and an increased interest in sports. However, it is reported that drinking has greatly increased in England during recent years.

Whereas the licensing system seems to have a respectable name in England, in most parts of the United States prior to 1920 it was apparently in disrepute. It appears that before national prohibition in this country, the saloon was generally regarded as a public disgrace; and politics, vice, and gambling were all involved in the liquor trade. But it must be remembered that the social and governmental conditions in England are considerably different from those of this country. A plan that may work fairly successfully in one country will not necessarily be adapted to the needs and conditions of another country. For example, the English tradition of public order and regard for law has long been lacking in large areas of the United States. The English public house is divorced from local politics; the justice of the peace grants the licenses to the public houses in the area for which he is

<sup>1</sup> Fosdick and Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

appointed. Furthermore, it might be pointed out that the office of a justice of the peace in England is a highly respected one, and usually only men of good character and ability are appointed to the office, which is for life.

In the year 1933 Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott made an extensive examination of the American and European experience with the license system of liquor control. Their investigations convinced them that the weaknesses of the license system cannot be eradicated from the operation of that system in the United States.<sup>2</sup> They recommended absolute abandonment of additional legislative attempts at licensing and suggested that an altogether different plan of control should be adopted.<sup>3</sup> However, Fosdick and Scott recognized that some states would likely "be tempted to follow beaten paths and adhere to the old rules"; so they presented the following outline, which according to their judgment is "the soundest possible licensing system, if such a system must be adopted."<sup>4</sup>

First: The most important prerequisite of a licensing system is the establishment of a single state licensing board, carrying state-wide power and responsibility. The administrative personnel of the board should be appointed by the governor "on a merit basis, free from politics and with a permanent tenure." The board should work through a "well-paid, full-time managing director."

Second: The members of the board should consist of men outstanding for their character, integrity, and intelligence; otherwise, "the licensing system will be defeated before it starts."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-52.



Third: Under no circumstances should a retail establishment be permitted to be in any way under the control of or under obligation to a particular distiller or brewer.

Fourth: The number and types of places where liquor may be sold should be definitely restricted.

Fifth: "Licenses should be classified to recognize the inherent differences between beer, wine and spirits as problems of control."

Sixth: The hours during which alcoholic beverages may be sold, especially for on-premises use, should be carefully regulated.

Seventh: "Licenses issued for the retail sales of liquor should run not only to the person who sells, but to the *premises* where the liquor is sold. Revocation of a premises license is a far more effective weapon of control than is the revocation of an individual license."

Eighth: All sales methods that encourage consumption should be prohibited, as far as possible, by means of the license law. This means that the consumers of liquor should be given no "treats on the house," credit, or bargain days.

Ninth: Wherever possible, liquor advertising should be strictly limited or prohibited.

Tenth: Efforts should be made to control liquor prices and profits.

3. *Government control through corporations.* An example of this method is the so-called Bratt System of Sweden. Under this system the government grants a monopoly to a private, nonprofit corporation, under the Royal Board of Liquor Control appointed by the king, which has control of importation, manufacture, and wholesale trade of alcoholic beverages other than



beer.<sup>5</sup> These nonprofit companies each have five directors—two of the company's own choice, two appointed by local authorities, and one appointed by the royal board. This system carries local option privileges and grants any district the right of total or partial prohibition. Individual purchases may be made only by holders of passbooks in which all package purchases at retail shops are recorded. The amount of liquor which an individual or family may buy is strictly limited. This Swedish method of control seems to contain certain desirable features. The element of private profit is removed from the liquor business by the fact that all financial returns in excess of interest on investment (6 per cent for the general corporation and 5 per cent for the retail companies)<sup>6</sup> accrue to the government treasury, to be spent in promoting public welfare through sanitation, education, and various other indirect methods of reducing intemperance.

4. *Government management of the distribution and sale of liquor, particularly the heavier alcoholic beverages.* The state monopoly system of the sale of alcoholic liquors has been attempted in certain of the Canadian provinces. A description and analysis of this plan will not be made at this point, but in subsequent pages a plan of government liquor monopoly that may be applicable to American conditions will be presented. The plan to be suggested will include a number of ideas and features drawn from plans already proposed or actually in operation.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

## EXPERIMENTS IN AMERICA WITH CONTROL SYSTEMS

During the past hundred years the people of the United States have attempted vast and varied experiments in the field of liquor control. Within that period, national, state, county, or city governments have tried practically every known system. Certain states have frequently changed from one system to another. For instance, between 1851 and 1915 nine different systems of liquor regulation were tried in Ohio.<sup>7</sup> In less than forty years Rhode Island changed from license to prohibition and back again three times.<sup>8</sup> Iowa has had some form of state-wide prohibition at four different periods in her history.<sup>9</sup> Fosdick and Scott present an accurate account of the situation when they say:

Liquor legislation in America presents a bewildering picture of shifting public sentiment and vacillating policies. The pendulum has swung from one extreme to another; reaction from a particular experiment repeatedly has carried succeeding legislation far in the opposite direction. Laws have been hastily and immaturely conceived, and new experiments have been cramped by minute legislative restrictions and handed over to the tender mercies of the spoils system, making success under any circumstances impossible. There are but few instances in America in which scientific consideration or long and patient study by experts has been given to the ends desired, the issues at stake or the principles involved. Make-shift and improvisation have far too often been the tools employed. Public irritation and impatience have greeted the progress of each new system of control, and frequently, before the system has had an opportunity to prove itself one way or the other a new system has been devised and put into operation.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Gillette and Reinhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 751.

<sup>8</sup> Fosdick and Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

It has not been generally recognized that prohibition is quite an old idea in the United States. Long before 1920 many states had experimented with it. In fact, there have been three waves of state-wide prohibition in this country within the past hundred years. The first was between 1845 and 1855. At that time thirteen states adopted prohibition in one form or another. Its fate varied from a trial of one year in New York, two years in Illinois, Delaware, and Iowa, forty-eight years in New Hampshire, and fifty years in Vermont, to seventy years (with a two-year break) in Maine. The thirteen prohibition states had been reduced to six by 1863, and of those six, five eventually gave up the plan.

A second wave of state-wide prohibition began in the 1880's and enrolled eight states, representing, in part at least, the return to dry status of those states in which prohibition had been tried and discarded. Only three states remained dry by 1904.

The third wave of state-wide prohibition began during the first decade of the twentieth century. When the United States entered the war in 1917, the foundations of national prohibition had been definitely laid, there being twenty-five dry states at that time. By 1919, prior to the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment, thirty-three states had prohibition laws. On January 20, 1920, the national prohibition law, which Congress had passed over the veto of President Wilson in 1919, became effective. The prohibition amendment had been approved by the voters of forty-six states in 1919; there can thus be no doubt that it then represented a strong national public opinion. But during the fourteen years from 1920 to 1933 a change

took place in the minds of the voters, and a new amendment, the Twenty-first, repealed the Eighteenth.

### SOME REASONS FOR THE "FAILURE" OF NATIONAL PROHIBITION

Among the factors which apparently entered into the repeal of prohibition as a national system of liquor control are the following:

1. The United States, as President Wilson stated when he vetoed the measure, was not ready for such a plan of control. The law did not have in its favor the opinion and attitudes of the general population that were necessary to insure its support. As Professor Charles A. Ellwood says:

This was an idealistic law which required high social ideals on the part of our people for its enforcement and observance. It must be remembered that law is nothing but the habits and convictions of a majority of the people, and that in a democracy laws can be enforced only in proportion as they are generally observed. The difficulty of enforcing the prohibition law in the United States was chiefly connected with the habits of a large element of the American people who did not change their attitude toward drink. Believing that it was right for them to drink personally, they made it practically impossible to enforce prohibition laws, whether state or national.<sup>11</sup>

Many public officials had such a lack of respect for the prohibition law that they violated their oaths to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution." Alice Roosevelt Longworth in her autobiography describes her impression of the attitude of the President of the United States, Warren G. Harding, and other leaders in Washington toward the law and the example which they set for their subordinates and the general population. The following passage may be cited:

<sup>11</sup> *Social Problems and Sociology* (New York, 1935), pp. 362-363.



Though violation of the Eighteenth Amendment was a matter of course in Washington, it was rather shocking to see the way Harding disregarded the Constitution he had sworn to uphold. Though nothing to drink was served downstairs, there were always, at least before unofficial dinners, cocktails in the upstairs hall outside the President's room and the guests were shown up there instead of waiting below for the President. While the big official receptions were going on, I don't think the people had any idea what was taking place in the rooms above. One evening while one was in progress, a friend of the Hardings asked me if I would like to go up to the study. I had heard rumors and was curious to see for myself what truth was in them. No rumor could have exceeded the reality; the study was filled with cronies, Daugherty, Jess Smith, Alex Moore, and others, the air heavy with tobacco smoke, trays with bottles containing every imaginable brand of whiskey stood about, cards and poker chips ready at hand—a general atmosphere of waistcoat unbuttoned, feet on the desk, and spittoon alongside.<sup>12</sup>

2. The prohibition law attempted to remove the use of alcoholic beverages from our culture without putting anything definite in its place. When anything exists in a cultural system, it is there because it is supposed to meet some need or desire. If it is removed something must be ready to take its place; otherwise unintended and often disastrous consequences are likely to occur. Throughout the country illicit liquor was produced and distributed, evidently in response to popular demand. It was in response to a demand for liquor that illegitimate stills and bootlegging organizations flourished everywhere. During the ten-year period, 1921-1930, a total of 250,028 illicit stills were confiscated in the United States.<sup>13</sup> It ap-

<sup>12</sup> *Crowded Hours* (New York, 1933), p. 324.

<sup>13</sup> Figures on illicit stills compiled from *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue* (Washington), issues for years 1921-1926; and *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Prohibition*, issues for the years 1927-1930.



pears that a large part of the public was demanding that which it had prohibited, partly or maybe largely because a desired and adequate substitute for liquor had not been established.

3. Although the prohibition law was generally expected to remove the use of alcoholic beverages from American society,<sup>14</sup> the Eighteenth Amendment did not make provision to prohibit the purchase, possession, or use of liquor. The amendment read as follows:

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several states shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Thus according to the law a man committed no illegal act when he purchased liquor; yet the other party to the transaction, the bootlegger who sold it to him, was guilty of a crime for which if caught and convicted he could be heavily fined or sent to prison. To large numbers of people such a law appeared inconsistent, a caricature of justice and common sense. They lost interest in the prohibition of the manufacture, transportation, and sale of an article that was perfectly legal for a person to purchase, possess, and use. Such a situation furnished the violators of the law a certain sense of security and also an opportunity to rationalize their conduct. The classic statement by

<sup>14</sup> Congress put into the enforcement act the statement that "all the provisions of this act shall be liberally construed to the end that the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage may be prevented."

Al Capone perhaps expressed the general attitude of the underworld:

I make my money by supplying a public demand. If I break the law, my customers, who number hundreds of the best people in Chicago, are as guilty as I am. The only difference between us is that I sell and they buy. Everybody calls me a racketeer. I call myself a business man. When I sell liquor, it's bootlegging. When my patrons serve it on a silver tray on Lake Shore Drive, it's hospitality.<sup>15</sup>

It was the purchasers who established the demand, supplied the funds, and furnished the market for the whole illegal liquor business. They gave the underworld its lifeblood, the money that made it wealthy and powerful, which enabled it to corrupt politics, bribe public officials, and often carry on its operations under the protection of those who were supposed to enforce the law.

Judge James L. Cooper, in offering a practicable plan whereby the Eighteenth Amendment could be made effective, made the following proposal:

Adopt a law, or laws, *making the purchaser equally guilty with the seller*. . . . The bootlegger cannot exist without customers. If his customers were equally guilty with him, and each compelled to disclose the transaction, *many citizens who now purchase would cease to do so rather than become violators of law*, and others would hesitate to take the chance. . . . It would stigmatize the purchase and consumption of intoxicating liquor and hasten the day when consumers of intoxicating liquor would lose caste in society.<sup>16</sup>

4. Adequate provision was not made for the enforcement of the prohibition law. The enforcement agencies never had a sufficiently large, carefully selected, highly trained, and well-paid force of men.

<sup>15</sup> Dobyns, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256.

R. Q. Merrick, prohibition administrator for Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, stated that a force of 12,000 field agents and an appropriation of not less than \$50,000,000 was necessary for the proper enforcement of the prohibition law in the United States.<sup>17</sup> Yet Congress appropriated only \$2,000,000 for 1920, the year the law went into effect; and at the close of that year there were only 2,239 prohibition agents, of whom 1,512 were delegated to enforce the law.<sup>18</sup> For 1921 the appropriation was \$6,350,000, and at the end of that year there were only 1,372 enforcement agents in service.<sup>19</sup> During subsequent years the appropriation and number of agents were increased slightly, but not to a degree to make any great change in the situation. Fletcher Dobyns says:

In 1926, General Andrews, head of the Prohibition Department of the treasury, told the Senate Investigating Committee that for the prohibition district which included all of New England except Connecticut, there were 91 agents. For the district which included the eastern and southern judicial districts of New York and Connecticut, there were 190 agents, and 129 for Indiana, Illinois, and the eastern judicial district of Wisconsin. In his statement, which was made in 1929, Mr. Merrick said: "I have 246 counties in the three states to be policed by 80 men, and they can only scratch the surface."<sup>20</sup>

The Wickersham Commission in its "Conclusions and Recommendations" stated:

The Commission is of the opinion that prior to the enactment of the Bureau of Prohibition Act, 1927, the agencies for enforcement were badly organized and inadequate; that subsequent to that enactment there has been continued improvement in organization and effort for enforcement.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 270.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 270.

The Commission is of the opinion that the present organization for enforcement is still inadequate.<sup>21</sup>

5. A strong political pressure and propaganda machine worked against the prohibition system. Undoubtedly one of the main factors in the ultimate "failure" of national prohibition was the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment. On January 21, 1924, speaking before the national House of Representatives, the Honorable Louis C. Cramton said:

This day there meets in Washington the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment in a so-called face-the-facts conference. . . . It is an organization opposed to law enforcement, promoting, thriving upon and rejoicing at the triumph of crime and disorder over law and order.

From its very beginning the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment has proclaimed its nullification program. In its prospectus issued soon after the incorporation of the organization in April 1919, *before the wartime prohibition measure had gone into effect*, but some months after the Eighteenth Amendment had been ratified in the manner prescribed by the Constitution, it declared:

"This association has two immediate aims: (1) To prevent the country from going on a bone-dry basis on July 1, and (2) to make the Eighteenth Amendment forever inoperative."

It daily prophesies failure, justifies violation of the law, opposes enforcement, throws its influence on the side of lawlessness when it ought to be on the side of law and order.<sup>22</sup>

Through the organization's propaganda, the people of the United States were told that the Eighteenth Amendment was a failure, that it was responsible for bootlegging, drunkenness, and crime, and that it was one of the major causes of the depression. A demand

<sup>21</sup> National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, *Report on the Enforcement of the Prohibition Laws of the United States* (Washington, 1931), p. 83.

<sup>22</sup> Dobyns, *op. cit.*, p. 3, quoting from *Congressional Record*, LXV, Part 2, 68th Congress, 1213.



was made for the repeal of the amendment in the interest of law and order, clean politics, true temperance, and prosperity. The magnitude of the work of the association is indicated by the following passages from the annual report of the association for 1930:

Available clippings on file in this office prove that six hundred millions of copies of newspapers, containing conspicuous publication of our news, were read in almost every community throughout the country during the year; 153,617,704 copies of magazines and periodicals containing articles and editorials attacking prohibition have been read by the public similarly.

More than 4,000,000 copies of books, pamphlets, reports, reprints, letters and leaflets were distributed from our office in 1930.

With the cooperation and consent of the newspapers and artists concerned, a collection of cartoons attacking and ridiculing prohibition was widely distributed.<sup>23</sup>

Some of the real motives and methods of the men behind the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment were revealed by the association's own secret files, which were seized by the Senate Lobby Investigation Committee. Apparently the members were interested in saving themselves millions of dollars by substituting for an income tax a liquor tax to be paid by the masses. For instance, at the lobby hearing Senator Caraway read the following statement from a memorandum found in the Association's files, dated October 26, 1926: "Irénee du Pont's statement that one of his companies would save \$10,000,000 in corporation tax if we should have, say, the British tax on beer."<sup>24</sup> A member of the board of directors of

<sup>23</sup> Dobyns, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.



the association, Thomas W. Phillips, Jr., president of T. W. Phillips Gas and Oil Company, in a letter to Pierre S. du Pont said:

As I look upon this matter, I realize that prohibition has indirectly cost me already several hundred thousand dollars; and, of course, if it continues indefinitely, the amount that I will be assessed on account of this religious and reform fanaticism will mount into the seven-figure column. I do not know how this strikes other people, but it is very irritating to me. . . .<sup>25</sup>

6. The state and local governments did not cooperate sufficiently with the federal government in the administration of federal enforcement laws. In a separate statement attached to the Wickersham Commission Report, George W. Wickersham said: "I am entirely in accord with the views expressed in the Report that Prohibition cannot be accomplished without the cooperation of the States and the active support of public opinion. This cooperation has been and still is sadly lacking in many States."<sup>26</sup>

7. It is likely that the change in prohibition sentiment was a part of the decline of public interest in reform movements in general. Professor Hornell Hart's examination of periodical literature to discover public interest in reform movements indicates that interest in such movements reached a peak between 1905 and 1915 and had declined considerably by 1930.<sup>27</sup> Table X shows the results of Professor Hart and W. B. Mills's investigation of magazine articles devoted to prohibition and liquor problems for the years 1905-1930.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>27</sup> President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends*, I, 427-430.

TABLE X  
ATTITUDES TOWARD PROHIBITION AS EXPRESSED IN  
MAGAZINE ARTICLES, 1905-1930\*

YEAR	1905	1915	1920	1930
Total number indicator articles	175	556	383	467
Favorable to prohibition	91	416	359	171
Unfavorable to prohibition	0	22	275	428

\* President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends*, I, 424-425.

### TOWARD A SOLUTION OF THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM: A CONSIDERATION OF SOME BASIC MEASURES AND PRINCIPLES

If the history of liquor legislation in this country has anything to teach us, it is that all too often we have imposed on law a task which law by itself is not able to accomplish. Law has been resorted to in an attempt to overcome the failures of other agencies of social control. We have frequently fallen into the fallacy of believing that we could change, by means of law and police force, tendencies which in their nature are not easily modified by command or coercion. We have labored under the illusion that words on a statute book could, as if they contained some magical power, alter the tastes, preferences, habits, and customs of men. It is as James Coolidge Carter says: "Nothing is more attractive to the benevolent vanity of men than the notion that they can effect great improvement in society by the simple process of forbidding all wrong conduct, or conduct that they think is wrong, by law, and of enjoining all good conduct by the same means."<sup>28</sup>

Public standards furnish the basis for law. Ordinarily the only standard which law has any possibility of enforcing is the standard prevailing in the general

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Fosdick and Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

population and not that which obtains in a single group, no matter how social-minded or enlightened it may be. Public standards are not created by means of night sticks and patrol wagons but rather through the long, slow, difficult process of education. Thus it is through the processes of education, learning, and conditioning that the fundamental approach to the problem of alcohol is to be found. This point will be discussed more fully in subsequent pages.

It is not to be understood that government and law have no definite function to perform in solving the alcohol problem. They have an important part to play if they are based on the attitudes and desires of the public. When government and law are backed by strong public opinion and support, they are the chief means of maintaining unity and order and of controlling the aberrant individuals and groups whose behavior is against social welfare.

#### POLICIES WHICH THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT MAY ADOPT

It appears that there are at least three general policies which the American government or any government may adopt toward the manufacture, sale and use of alcoholic beverages: (1) practice *laissez faire*, (2) attempt some system of prohibition, (3) adopt some regulatory and control plan.

All civilized societies, and, from what anthropologists have discovered, practically all preliterate societies as well, have found sooner or later that a *laissez-faire* policy toward alcoholic beverages does not work. The consequences of such a policy reduce social efficiency and threaten the social order, and thus the group or society is ultimately driven to adopt some form of

control. Undoubtedly a let-alone policy is out of the question for this country, because the vast majority of the American people seem to recognize that some form of liquor regulation is necessary.

If recent American history indicates anything, it is that the general population of this country would not support another system of national prohibition within the near future. A large and influential percentage of the population called for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment because they disliked or regarded it as a failure. Regardless of whether or not their opinion is based on facts, the majority of people have decided that no great danger is involved in "temperate drinking," and they contend therefore that only immoderate drinking requires restrictive measures. Such an attitude seems to preclude national prohibition.

Taking the situation as it is in this country, the only policy that seems to be acceptable and advisable at the present time for most regions is one of regulation and control. As to the type of control, that is a matter for discussion. Considering the experience of the various states, the nation as a whole, and other nations with systems of liquor control, it appears wise to caution against depending upon any single system as a cure-all. The final test of any program of control is general social welfare and efficiency as reflected in health, morals, improved standards of living, and reduction in crime.

#### SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR A CONTROL SYSTEM

There are certain principles and requirements which any plan of liquor control may have to meet in



order to be successfully operated in the United States. The following suggestions deserve consideration:

1. Some concrete plan should be established for the nation as a whole. The plan should be so designed as to create a balance between the functions of the federal and state governments, defining the duties of each, and making for mutual adjustment and co-operation. It should give the federal government adequate power to regulate and control those phases of the alcohol problem that concern the population as a whole and those that are of nation-wide significance. The plan should leave to the states as much authority as possible, both in policy and in methods of local control, in order that each state may adapt its own plan to the general public sentiment and to local conditions. This would provide a plan that could be adjusted to the varied social, racial, and other conditions throughout the United States and within particular states.

2. Adequate provision should be made for the effective control and regulation of individual and group conduct that is of an antisocial nature; but it must respect and protect freedom of individual and group behavior that is not antisocial in nature. Such a plan, if wisely designed, would more likely insure public favor and support, which are most essential for the observance and effective enforcement of any program of liquor control.

3. Adequate provision should be made whereby every phase of the liquor control program may be free in the highest possible degree from politics and the spoils system.

4. The federal government should be vested with the power to regulate the manufacture and transporta-



tion of alcoholic beverages within the United States as well as their importation and exportation.

5. All excess financial returns over fixed interest (5 or 6 per cent) on the manufacture of and wholesale traffic in alcoholic beverages should accrue to the treasury of the federal government.

6. The federal government should prohibit all advertising of alcoholic beverages. This would include advertising by newspapers, magazines, radio, billboards, booklets, leaflets, and any other means.

7. The federal government should require a warning label to be placed on every bottle of beverage alcohol stating the nature of such a beverage and the danger involved in its use. In 1941 before a meeting of the American Medical Association in Cleveland, Drs. Merrill Moore, Leo Alexander, and Abraham Myerson made the following statement:

If the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act is designed to prevent and to protect the American public and its health from the menace of drug intoxication and addiction, then it should apply to alcohol as its first drug of choice instead of neglecting and ignoring it altogether. . . . If one placed in a heap all the wreckage of human lives produced by the habit-formation implied in morphinism, cocaineism, barbiturate addiction, and all the narcotic and hypnotic drugs put together, and if one were to balance against them all the habit-formation of disastrous type subsumed under the term alcoholism, the scale would shift immediately and unmistakably toward alcoholism.<sup>29</sup>

Drs. Moore, Alexander, and Myerson then recommended that the Food and Drug Administration require all alcoholic beverages to carry warning labels, inasmuch as such labels are required by law for other dangerous and habit-forming drugs. They suggested

<sup>29</sup> Reported in *Science News Letter*, XXXIX (June 14, 1941), 375.

the following label, which deserves serious consideration:

Direction for Use: Use moderately and not on successive days. Eat well while drinking and, if necessary, supplement food by vitamin tablets while drinking. WARNING: May be habit-forming; not for use by children. If this beverage is indulged in immoderately it may cause intoxication (drunkenness), later neuralgia and paralysis (neuritis) and serious mental derangement, such as delirium tremens and other curable and incurable mental diseases, as well as kidney and liver damage.<sup>30</sup>

8. States, counties, and cities should be given the right of local option regarding the kinds of alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, or distilled spirits) that may or may not be sold in their communities. They should also be free to determine the times during which such beverages may or may not be sold.

9. Each state in which alcoholic beverages are legalized should take over, as a public monopoly to be handled through its own stores, the distribution and retail sale of all the heavier alcoholic beverages, none of which should be sold at any place for on-premises consumption.<sup>31</sup> Fosdick and Scott say: "Foreign experience and our own analysis of the problem here and abroad indicate that such a system makes its possible adequately to meet an unstimulated demand within the limits of conditions established solely in the interests of society."<sup>32</sup> The public monopoly system, by taking the private profit motive out of retail traffic in the heavier alcoholic beverages, eliminates one of the

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Since the use of alcoholic beverages affects both personal and social welfare to such a wide extent, state ownership and management of retail liquor stores is advocated. Such a plan seems to be consistent with public ownership or control of various agencies involving public health and welfare.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

main factors working for increase in the consumption of liquor.

10. Only the state, subject to the approval of the local government, should be allowed to issue permits to establishments dealing in the retail sale of beverages of low alcoholic content. Such establishments should be under strict regulations and should be frequently inspected.

11. A graduated tax should be placed on all alcoholic beverages according to alcoholic content. This means that higher taxes should be placed on beverages of high alcoholic content and a relatively lower tax on beverages of low alcoholic content. Professor Yandell Henderson of Yale University recommends that a low tax be levied on beer, wine and diluted spirits.<sup>33</sup>

12. Individuals should be allowed to purchase the heavier alcoholic beverages by permit only, and the amount that each is permitted to purchase should be strictly limited. Permits should not be issued to minors, to persons unable or unwilling to support themselves and their families, or to persons convicted of offenses involving the use of liquor.

13. All dispensing places, both for on-premises and off-premises consumption, should be subject to strict regulations. They should be open public places, well

<sup>33</sup> *A New Deal in Liquor: A Plea for Dilution* (New York, 1934), *passim*. The present author believes that Professor Henderson's general principle has some evidence in its favor, but that he underestimates the danger involved in the use of beers, wines, and diluted spirits. For instance, it is not likely that scientific facts will bear out the following statement: "We should recognize . . . that the concentration above which alcohol becomes seriously habit-forming and harmful is between 15 and 20 per cent by volume; and that the higher percentages are increasingly injurious not only to the individual, but also socially and politically. If we could largely confine our drinking to beverages below 15 or 18 per cent of alcohol by volume, the peculiar American problem would largely disappear, alike in its individual, its social, and its political aspects" (p. 178).

lighted, and free from inducements to loafing and carousing.

14. All dispensing establishments should be restricted to business districts and forbidden in the vicinity of schools, churches, and factories.

15. The public revenue-raising motive should be divorced, as far as possible, from the liquor traffic. To consider liquor control mainly as a source of revenue is to risk government-sponsored encouragement of the production and sale of alcoholic beverages as a profitable business. Such a situation would obviously defeat the purpose and plan of a control system. As a preventive measure, all money received by the federal and state governments from taxes and profits on alcoholic beverages should be placed in a separate fund. After all expenses involved in the control system have been deducted, the money should be used to help in removing the real or imagined need which causes alcoholic beverages to occupy such a prominent place in our culture. To this end the funds should be spent on education and legislation—economic and social as well as medical. The establishment of adequate hospitals or farms for the care and treatment of alcohol addicts and chronic alcoholics should constitute an important phase of such a program.

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH

The experience of this country and other countries with various types of liquor control should convince those interested in solving the alcohol problem that their main hope cannot be placed in any legal system. Legislation is never a royal road to the solution of any social problem of great magnitude. This does not mean that the power of legislation is to be minimized.



Law has a definite function to perform, as has been pointed out in the foregoing pages. But the important fact that must be recognized is that *alcoholic indulgence is too deeply rooted in the customs of human societies to admit of being removed simply by means of legal processes*. Those who are working toward a solution of the alcohol problem must not focus their eyes so bemusedly on the dazzling lights of legislative measures that they grow blind to the necessity of slower and more difficult but surer methods.

In working toward a solution of the alcohol problem, ultimate reliance must be placed upon methods that will enable a society to modify or remove from its cultural system the custom of using alcoholic beverages. In other words, the alcohol problem, like any other social problem, must be treated at its sources—those sources that reach back into the desires, needs, attitudes, and habits of the members of society. Among the methods by which the social custom of using alcoholic beverages may be changed, the following seem to deserve primary consideration: (1) the establishment of acceptable substitutes for alcoholic beverages, (2) a widespread understanding on the part of the members of society about the nature of alcoholic beverages and the effects of their use, and (3) the development of a social consciousness concerning the problems arising out of the use of alcoholic beverages.

#### SUBSTITUTES FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

There must be a recognition of the fact that alcoholic beverages are used because people feel that they satisfy certain of their needs and desires. As Giorgio Lolli says, alcohol produces “changes which, however short-lived and subjective, allow the individual to re-



interpret himself and his environment in a more satisfactory light."<sup>33a</sup> Irrespective of its ultimate consequences, alcohol does afford temporary relief from worry, remove mental tension, disguise difficulties, obliterate feelings of inferiority, and offer other momentary satisfactions. It is not likely that the conditions in any civilized society will ever be so nearly ideal that its members will be free for long from such needs and desires. Neither does it appear probable that mankind will not always want something that lends "ceremony, color, and fellowship to life." This does not mean that alcohol is the only method of gratifying such impulses and wants. It simply means that human nature and human needs must be taken into account. If the leaders of a society find that the use of alcoholic beverages works against personal and social welfare and efficiency and thus attempt to reduce or remove the use of such drinks from that society, they should likewise seek to establish acceptable substitutes for beverage alcohol. Abstinence must be made more than a mere negation. What are some of the possible substitutes for alcohol?

1. It seems that more wholesome and enjoyable means of recreation and entertainment ought to provide alternatives to alcohol. It is common knowledge that athletes in training ordinarily consume no liquor. Football and baseball players, track men, and contenders for championships in various games are, with almost no exceptions, total abstainers, at least while they are engaged in the various sports. They have evidently found something which they choose in preference to

<sup>33a</sup> Lolli, Giorgio, "The Addictive Drinker," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, X (Dec., 1949), 404.

alcoholic beverages. It is a fairly common knowledge that the average American community is sorely lacking in suitable means of recreation for both its young people and adults. It might be pointed out that more intelligent and ingenious planning of parties, receptions, and other social gatherings would serve perhaps as well as alcohol to enrich community life with color, vitality, and fellowship.

2. The practice of sound principles of mental hygiene. Millions of people have learned how to live in such a manner that they are able to relax and to forget their worries temporarily without resorting to the use of alcoholic beverages or other narcotics. In a contest among the members of the Cleveland Academy of Medicine, the following rules of mental hygiene received first prize:

*a)* Have a hobby: acquire pursuits which absorb your interest. Sports and "nature" are best.

*b)* Develop a philosophy: adapt yourself to social and spiritual surroundings.

*c)* Share your thoughts: cultivate companionship in thought and in feeling. Confide, confess, consult.

*d)* Face your fears: analyze them; daylight dismisses ghosts.

*e)* Balance fantasy with fact: dream, but also do; wish, but build; imagine, but ever face reality.

*f)* Beware alluring escapes: alcohol, opiates, and barbitals may prove faithless friends.

*g)* Exercise: walk, swim, golf: muscles need activity.

*h)* Love, but love wisely: sex is a flame which, uncontrolled, may scorch; properly guided, it will light the torch of eternity.

i) Don't become engulfed in a whirlpool of worries: call early for help. The doctor is ready for your rescue.

j) Trust in time: be patient and hopeful; time is a great therapist.<sup>34</sup>

3. A vital religious experience. Within the past hundred years religious people, particularly evangelical Protestants, have revolutionized their thoughts and attitudes regarding the use of alcoholic beverages. As was pointed out in the first chapter, the early American religious bodies not only approved but also defended the use of alcoholic beverages. Today the values and standards of many Christian groups are definitely opposed to the use of alcohol as a beverage. Many such groups advocate the belief in a way of life that will enable a person to get along without alcohol. There are cases in almost every American community of alcohol addicts who through religion were able to free themselves from the hold which alcohol had upon them. Dr. Robert V. Seliger says: "Through faith in a Higher Power, more people have found delivery from alcohol over the centuries than in any other way."<sup>35</sup>

One of the best illustrations of the power of religion to free men from alcohol addiction is seen in the results of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former alcoholics (they speak of themselves only as arrested cases) which now has 2,700 chapters in this country and abroad and a total membership of 75,000 to 100,000. This unique group movement has startled the scientific world by the impact which it makes upon the chronic alcoholic. Physicians, ministers, and social

<sup>34</sup> Quoted from A. C. Ivy, "Why Do People Drink?," *International Student*, XXXIX (April, 1942), 139.

<sup>35</sup> "To Drink or Not to Drink," *Woman's Home Companion* (July, 1949), p. 65.

workers increasingly testify that this group's methods are sound and its results more promising than anything known to modern science. Alcoholics Anonymous claim that they bring about their "cures" through "mutual aid" and "a spiritual common denominator." They say:

It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that at least two out of three alcoholics who wish to get well could apparently do so.<sup>36</sup>

With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.<sup>37</sup>

Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves the essence of spiritual experience.<sup>38</sup>

The steps which Alcoholics Anonymous have taken as a program of recovery are as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

<sup>36</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous* (New York, 1947), p. 391.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve conscious contact with God *as we understood Him* praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of those steps we tried to carry this message to all alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.<sup>39</sup>

The following story is related by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous, one of thousands who have described their experiences:

At fourteen years of age, when I should have been at home under the supervision of my parents, I was in the United States army serving a one year enlistment. I found myself with a bunch of men none too good for a fourteen year old kid who passed easily for eighteen. I transferred my hero-worshipping to these men of the world. I suppose the worst damage done in that year in the army barracks was the development of an almost unconscious admiration for their apparently jolly sort of living.

Once out of uniform I went to Mexico where I worked for an oil company. Here I learned to take on a good cargo of beer and hold it. Later I rode the range in the Texas cow country and often went to town with the boys to "whoop it up on pay-day." By the time I returned to my home in the middle west I had learned several patterns of living, to say nothing of a cock-sure attitude that I needed no advice from anyone.

The next ten years were sketchy. During this time I married and established my own home and everything was lovely for a time. Soon I was having a good time getting around the law in speakeasies. Oh yes, I outsmarted our national laws but I was not quite successful in evading the old moral law.

I was working for a large industrial concern and had been promoted to a supervisory job. In spite of big parties, I was for three or four years able to be on the job the next morning.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.



Then gradually the hangovers became more persistent and I found myself not only needing a few shots of liquor before I could go to work at all, but finally found it advisable to stay home and sober up by the taper-off method. My bosses tried to give me some good advice. When that didn't help they tried more drastic measures, laying me off without pay. They covered up my too frequent absences many times in order to keep them from the attention of the higher officials of the company.

My attitude was that I could handle my liquor whenever I wanted to go about it seriously, and I considered my absences no worse than those of other employees and officials who were getting away with murder in their drinking.

One does not have to use his imagination much to realize that this sort of drinking is hard on the matrimonial relationship. After proving myself neither faithful nor capable of being temperate, my wife left me and obtained a judicial separation. This gave me a really good excuse to get drunk.

In the years 1933 and 1934 I was fired several times, but always got my job back on my promises to do better. On the last occasion I was reduced to the labor gang in the plant. I made a terrific effort to stay sober and prove myself capable of better things. I succeeded pretty well and one day I was called into the production chief's office and told I had met with the approval of the executive department and to be ready to start on a better job.

This good news seemed to justify a mild celebration with a few beers. Exactly four days later I reported for work only to find that they too knew about the "mild" celebration and that they had decided to check me out altogether. After a time I went back and was assigned to one of the hardest jobs in the factory. I was in bad shape physically and after six months of this, I quit, going on a drunk with my last pay check.

Then I began to find the friends with whom I had been drinking for some time seemed to disappear. This made me resentful and I found myself many times feeling that everybody was against me. Bootleg joints became my hang-outs. I sold books, car, and even clothing in order to buy a few drinks.

I am certain that my family kept me from gravitating to flophouses and gutters. I am eternally thankful to them that they never threw me out or refused to help when I was drinking. Of course I didn't appreciate their kindness then, and I began to stay away from home on protracted drinking spells.

Somehow my family heard of two men in town who had found a way to quit drinking. They suggested that I contact these men but I retorted, "If I can't handle my liquor with my own will power then I had better jump over the viaduct."

Another of my usual drinking spells came on. I drank for about ten days with no food except coffee before I was sick enough to start the battle back to sobriety with the accompanying shakes, night sweats, jittery nerves, and horrible dreams. This time I felt that I really needed some help. I told my mother she could call the doctor who was the center of the little group of former drinkers. She did.

I allowed myself to be taken to a hospital where it took several days for my head to clear and my nerves to settle. Then, one day I had a couple of visitors, one man from New York and the other a local attorney. During our conversation I learned that they had been as bad as myself in this drinking, and that they had found relief and had been able to make a come-back. Later they went into more detail and put it to me very straight that I'd have to give over my desires and attitudes to a power higher than myself which would give me new desires and attitudes.

Here was religion put to me in a different way and presented by three past-masters in liquor guzzling. On the strength of their stories I decided to give it a try. And it worked, as long as I allowed it to do so.

After a year of learning new ways of living, new attitudes and desires, I became self-confident and then careless. I suppose you would say I got to feeling too sure of myself and Zowie! First it was a beer on Saturday nights and then it was a fine drunk. I knew exactly what I had done to bring myself to this old grief. I had tried to handle my life on the strength of my own ideas and plans instead of looking to God for the inspiration and the strength.

But I didn't do anything about it. I thought "to hell with everybody. I'm going to do as I please." So I floundered around for seven months refusing help from any quarter. But one day I volunteered to take another drunk on a trip to sober him up. When we got back to town we were both drunk and went to a hotel to sober up. Then I began to reason the thing out. I had been a sober, happy man for a year, living decently and trying to follow the will of God. Now I was unshaven, unkept, ill-looking, bleary-eyed. I decided then and there and went back to my friends who offered to help and who never lectured me on my seven months failure.

That was a long time ago. I don't say now that I can do anything. I only know that as long as I seek God's help to the best of my ability, just so long will liquor never bother me.<sup>40</sup>

Dr. Robert Fleming says:

Religious conversion is an almost ideal substitute for alcohol—especially the red-blooded Salvation Army variety—because it supplies in a socially acceptable form so many of the satisfactions which drinking itself supplies: companionship, music, a feeling of personal importance, spiritual exaltation, and above all a follow-up system that presumably extends throughout eternity. No other substitute does more than approach religious conversion in effectiveness.<sup>41</sup>

#### AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURE AND EFFECT OF ALCOHOL

The results of scientific investigation on the nature and effects of the use of alcohol should not be allowed to remain in the library or laboratory as valuable but ineffectual contributions to knowledge. In an address delivered in 1936 while president of the American Public Health Association, Dr. Haven Emerson said: "Lack of information is largely responsible for the use

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 282-286.

<sup>41</sup> "The Treatment of Chronic Alcoholism," *New England Journal of Medicine*, CCXVII (1937), 779-783.

of alcoholic beverages as if they were necessary or in any way useful to a healthy man or woman."<sup>42</sup>

It is largely through education that the habits, opinions, and standards of the members of a society are changed. Of course, it must be acknowledged that education is a much-abused term and one that is too frequently employed as a panacea for every ailment of society. All too often in popular thinking education is looked upon as a final solution rather than as a working method. There is a widespread but inadequate conception of education that thinks of it almost exclusively in terms of formal instruction in the school. The school by itself is able to do little in modifying or stabilizing the ideals, habits, and standards of the individual. Other agencies, equal or superior to the school in influence, must be brought into the process.

It would appear, furthermore, that certain principles ought to be followed in any effective educational approach to the subject of the use of alcoholic beverages:

1. The discussions of the nature and effects of alcohol should be based only upon established facts. The scientifically accepted findings regarding the dangers involved in the use of alcohol are sufficiently disturbing as not to require embellishment. Instruction on alcohol that exaggerates and misleads tends ultimately to defeat its own purpose.

2. The approach to the question of alcohol should be that of free discussion based on the desire for unprejudiced dissemination of facts. The leaders in such an educational program should be of tolerant spirit, as free as possible from preconceived objectives, and possessed of a broad and scientific understanding of the problems of alcohol.

<sup>42</sup> Cited by Mary Lewis Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 5.



3. The main emphasis of instruction on alcohol should be based upon life, health, and personal and social welfare rather than upon the horrors of disease and death. The average person cannot be frightened into good behavior or browbeaten into accepting a particular pattern of living. Too much of the temperance teaching of the past has followed such methods and consequently has been, as someone has said, a "pedagogical monstrosity."

What are the agencies that should assume the responsibility in educating the members of society on the nature and effects of the use of alcoholic beverages? First and foremost, it would seem, comes the family. Our ideals, standards, and values have not only grown up to a great extent within the family and the other intimate or "face-to-face" groups, but are also to a very high degree transmitted from individual to individual through such groups. The child will more probably develop a reasonable attitude toward the use of alcoholic beverages through the help of the family group than through any other agency. What the child learns by precept and example from members of the family is likely to be of far greater influence than what he learns from any other source.

In the home no education can bear more direct fruit than the conduct and standards of the parents themselves. The danger of imitative drinking is not to be lightly dismissed. Children are quick to follow patterns set by their elders, patterns that often reflect thoughtlessness and lack of self-control. In homes where adults consider it smart to get "a little tight," or feel justified in resorting to alcohol to drown discontent or worry, it is natural that the children should follow the same technique.

A solemn assurance on the part of the father that a drink is bad for young people carries little weight if in the next



breath he insists that he must have a highball to nerve himself for a dull dinner party.<sup>43</sup>

A second agency that has an important part to play in alcohol education is the school. At this point, however, certain difficulties are encountered: What shall the school teach about alcohol? What shall be the aim of its instruction? Today all but one of the states have laws requiring public school temperance instruction.<sup>44</sup> In many of the states the schools face the problem of determining what is meant by "temperance instruction." Does it mean total abstinence or moderation in the use of alcoholic beverages? The dry forces in using the term temperance usually mean total abstinence, while the antidrys mean moderation. Perhaps such uncertainty and lack of definition are among the main causes for the perfunctory and inadequate program of alcohol education in many states.

It now seems evident that the only educational program on beverage alcohol that will enlist the interest and respect of students and teachers is one that faces the problem as a whole and considers, in an unbiased manner, the most reliable knowledge on the subject. It will also be a program that relates the facts of alcohol to everyday living.

A new approach to alcohol education through the schools was suggested in a report on health problems in education, issued in 1930, by joint committees of the American Medical Association and the National Education Association, with the co-operation of the Technical Committee of Twenty-seven. The following significant paragraphs are reprinted from that report:

<sup>43</sup> Charles H. Durfee, *To Drink or Not to Drink* (New York, 1937), pp. 189-190.

<sup>44</sup> Anne Roe, "A Survey of Alcohol Education in the United States," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, III (March, 1943), pp. 574-662.

The instruction concerning alcohol, tobacco, and other narcotics should be, in the main, part of the general work in training to personal health habits and to promotion of community health and welfare. The keynote should be, "Teach by facts and illustration; not by exhortation."

Ideally, the instruction should be positive and demonstrative. Practically, the persistence of erroneous traditional beliefs about these substances, especially about alcohol, makes necessary concrete knowledge of their nature and effect as reason for practicing sobriety.

The choice of material, therefore, involves: (1) recognition of the individual and community advantages resulting from sobriety; (2) correction of current fallacies as to the nature and effects of these substances in which much of their use finds excuse; (3) definite knowledge of modern scientific experiments and observations on this subject; (4) the application of this information to practical conditions of modern life in meeting individual and community problems. There are, for example, industrial and transportation conditions now which make the use of alcoholic liquors very much more dangerous in their results than was the case a century ago. The physiological lesson should be deftly interwoven with the concrete instruction.

Facts taught should be graded to meet the interest and psychological development of pupils. Motivation may be given through the appeal to desire for fitness for sports, efficiency in play and work, vigorous health, safety, service of others, character qualities such as self-control, kindness, sportsmanship, self-reliance, duty, responsibility, truth, good workmanship, cooperation, loyalty.<sup>45</sup>

A third agency that may have wide influence in alcohol education is the church. The church has had an incalculable influence on human behavior. Church leaders and church organizations have played a vital role in the temperance education of the past hundred years. In its function as an educational institution it has an important part to play in developing a realistic understanding of the nature and effects of the use of

<sup>45</sup> Quoted by Fosdick and Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141.

alcoholic beverages. The teaching and training programs of religious groups may be highly effective if based on established facts, made interesting, and adapted to everyday living. A religious group of young people in one American city conducted a clinic, "Youth Looks at Alcohol."<sup>46</sup> Some of the subjects for investigation and discussion were as follows: "What Liquor Costs the People of Our Country," "Radio Advertising of Beer," "The Liquor Ads," and "What We Saw at the Honky-tonks." Such activities, if they are directed by able leaders, who are well informed on the alcohol problem, should be of significant educational value.

The church also has the opportunity of setting high moral values, ideals, and standards before its members and the community. Many churches have covenants or laws by which the members agree "to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage."

A fourth influence of wide significance in alcohol education is that of adult education groups. If alcohol education is to be truly effective, it must go beyond the limits of the home, the school, and the church. It is possible that adult education groups could focus specialized attention on the problems of alcohol and could bring together men and women interested in learning the facts about alcohol and in maintaining an efficient and sober society. Such groups could without doubt receive great assistance from state boards of education, various public institutions, medical societies, the church, and other civic agencies.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS CONCERNING ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

It seems that a majority of the American people have hitherto looked upon the use of alcoholic bev-

<sup>46</sup> C. Aubrey Hearn, *Alcohol the Destroyer* (10th ed.; Nashville, 1943), p. 123.

erages as an individual matter. The spirit of individualism has been one of the leading characteristics of American thought. But it should now be evident that the use of intoxicating beverages in a modern society is far more than an individual problem. Ours is a highly interdependent society. The behavior of each member of a group has a definite effect upon the behavior and welfare of the group as a whole.

Thus, as with every other problem that relates to conduct, the alcohol problem cannot be solved solely on the basis of legislative decree, by the establishment of substitutes, or by educational programs, but only in so far as there is also developed a social consciousness, a public will, and a deep desire on the part of the members of society to solve the alcohol problem. McCarthy and Douglass say: "On the national scene a radical shift in popular feeling regarding the use of alcoholic beverages, which could be achieved by a long period of popular education, might culminate in a new national ideal of individual and social responsibility."<sup>47</sup> In modern societies the problem goes to the very center and core of civilization itself. If the members of a society possess strong convictions as to what is right and what is wrong, what is useful and what is detrimental, and what works for and what works against personal and social efficiency, then it seems that something can and will be done about the great social problems. They will make a strong and intelligent attempt to control the use of alcoholic beverages when they recognize that their use is affecting adversely life, health, and personal and social welfare—in short, the common good.

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 188.



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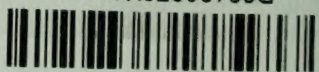








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